



Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)

Time and Date

2.00 pm on Thursday, 8th December, 2016

Place

NEW Committee Room 2 - Council House

Public Business

1. **Apologies and Substitutions**
2. **Declarations of Interests**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 8)
 - a) To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 10th November, 2016
 - b) Matters Arising
4. **Improvement Board Report - 14th November, 2016** (Pages 9 - 16)

Briefing Note of the Director for Children's Services
5. **Improving and Redesigning City Council Children's Residential Care Provision** (Pages 17 - 26)

Report of the Executive Director for People
6. **Education Travel Assistance Policy Changes - Public Consultation** (Pages 27 - 72)

Report of the Executive Director for People
7. **Outstanding Issues** (Pages 73 - 76)

Briefing Note of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator
8. **Work Programme** (Pages 77 - 84)

Briefing Note of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator
9. **Any Other Business**

Any other items of business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.

Private Business

Nil

Wednesday, 30 November 2016

Notes: 1) The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Michelle Rose, Governance Services, Council House, Coventry, telephone 7683 3111, alternatively information about this meeting can be obtained from the following web link: <http://moderngov.coventry.gov.uk>

2) Council Members who are not able to attend the meeting should notify Michelle Rose as soon as possible and no later than 1.00 p.m. on 8th December, 2016 giving their reasons for absence and the name of the Council Member (if any) who will be attending the meeting as their substitute.

3) Scrutiny Board Members who have an interest in any report to this meeting, but who are not Members of this Scrutiny Board, have been invited to notify the Chair by 12 noon on the day before the meeting that they wish to speak on a particular item. The Member must indicate to the Chair their reason for wishing to speak and the issue(s) they wish to raise.

Membership: Councillors N Akhtar, S Bains, D Gannon, S Hanson (Co-opted Member), K Jones (Co-opted Member), D Kershaw, M Lapsa, A Lucas, P Male, K Maton (By Invitation), C Miks, M Mutton (Chair), R Potter (Co-opted Member), E Ruane (By Invitation) and P Seaman (By Invitation)

Please note: a hearing loop is available in the committee rooms

If you require a British Sign Language interpreter for this meeting OR if you would like this information in another format or language please contact us.

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Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)
held at 2.00 pm on Thursday, 10 November 2016

Present:

Members: Councillor M Mutton (Chair)
Councillor N Akhtar
Councillor S Bains
Councillor J Clifford (substitute for Councillor Gannon)
Councillor D Kershaw
Councillor M Lapsa
Councillor P Male
Councillor S Walsh (substitute for Councillor Miks)

Co-Opted Members: Mrs Hanson

Cabinet Members and
Deputy Cabinet Members: Councillor P Akhtar
Councillor K Maton
Councillor E Ruane
Councillor P Seaman

Employees (by Directorate):

G Holmes, Resources Directorate
G Kell, People Directorate
L Pardy-McLaughlin, People Directorate
M Rose, Resources Directorate
M Stokes, People Directorate
R Sugars, Resources Directorate
G Thomas, People Directorate

Apologies: Councillors D Gannon, A Khan, A Lucas, C Miks
K Jones, R Potter

Public Business

32. Declarations of Interests

There were no Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

33. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 13th October, 2016 were approved.

34. Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking and Refugee Children

The Scrutiny Board considered a report of the Executive Director for People which detailed new schemes relating to Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking and Refugee Children. The Board also considered a briefing note containing additional information and recommendations. The Cabinet were due to consider the report on 29th November, 2016.

The report noted that the City Council had always welcomed and cared for unaccompanied asylum seeking children who had arrived in Coventry and the Council was clear in its commitment to welcome refugees to the City. The need to now welcome and support many more unaccompanied asylum seeking children displaced as a result of events abroad was critical.

The Government had made a number of commitments in relation to supporting and caring for children. The three schemes relating to these children had been issued by Central Government for local authorities to consider and adopt and were detailed in the report. Coventry had registered for the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) and intended to welcome children and families identified under the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (VCRS). The report detailed the financial implications of the support.

The additional briefing note recognised that starting in July 2014, Coventry was the second local authority to take Syrian refugees and accordingly had built up a network of support and other extended services to assist in the resettlement of vulnerable refugees fleeing conflict. The Council relied heavily on the expertise and support of local voluntary sector agencies to support this programme. Citizens Advice Coventry, Coventry Law Centre and Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre provided key support to Syrian refugees in the City along with assistance from a number of other partners including City of Sanctuary, Positive Youth Foundation and local faith groups. Importantly Coventry schools had also played a key role in meeting the needs of newly arrived communities, as had local NHS services.

There was cross-party support from the Scrutiny Board for the proposals and they agreed that the decision of the Leader, Cabinet Member's and officers was the right thing for the City to do, continuing Coventry's tradition as a city of Peace and Reconciliation.

The Scrutiny Board questioned the Cabinet Members, Deputy Cabinet Member and officers on the following:

- Costs and grants
- Criticism and opposition
- Corporate Parent responsibilities for the young people including progress in school
- Considerations prior to placement including family and religious support
- Expertise and support of local voluntary sector agencies

The Scrutiny Board requested data on progress of these children in school in the education performance report to be considered in January, 2017.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Board agreed the recommendations in the report and the additional recommendations in the briefing note

- (1) Approve and endorse the three schemes proposed by Central Government to support and care for unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children**
- (2) Note that the City Council has registered for the National Transfer Scheme (this decision having been made by the Chief Executive in**

- consultation with the Leader as a decision having been required in an emergency)
- (3) Delegate responsibility to the Executive Director People to confirm the total number of unaccompanied children that could be placed in the City for the remainder of this financial year.
 - (4) Confirm the City Council's commitment to welcoming children and families identified under the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme.
 - (5) To note the financial implications of resolving to support and care for unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children as detailed in this report.
 - (6) Cabinet consider the additional information
 - (7) Notify that meeting the needs of this vulnerable group places our potential financial burden on the LA and partners (NHS and Schools)
 - (8) Promote locally and nationally for all councils to take an equal share of responsibility for these children
 - (9) Petition central government for a full family formula

35. **Coventry Youth Offending Service (CYOS) Youth Justice Plan 2016/17**

The Scrutiny Board considered a briefing note of the Executive Director for People which provided information about the Youth Offending Service in Coventry and the Youth Justice Plan. Appended to the report were the Inspection Report and Action Plan and the Youth Justice Plan.

The briefing note provided information about the Coventry Youth Offending Service (CYOS) Youth Justice Plan, which has been agreed and signed off by its Statutory Partners, and sought endorsement of the plan that will be submitted to The Parliamentary Library in line with the requirements of the Crime Disorder Act, 1998. It also provided an update on the outcome of HM Inspectorate of Probation Short Quality Screening inspection that was undertaken in July 2016 and the service's response.

CYOS were required to report against three national indicators:

- Reducing the number of young people entering the criminal justice system (FTE)
- Reducing re offending
- Reducing the use of custody for young people

The briefing note included headlines and priorities.

The Scrutiny Board questioned officers on the following:

- Safeguarding as an area for improvement
- Performance management and supervision of staff
- Positive work activities and communication of these
- Positive partnership working
- How scrutiny could input earlier in the process
- Family support team
- Timescales

RESOLVED that

- (1) the Scrutiny Board agreed the recommendation in the report to endorse the Coventry Youth Offending Service (CYOS) Youth Justice Plan that will be submitted to The Parliamentary Library in line with the requirements of the Crime Disorder Act, 1998.**
- (2) to endeavour to look at next year's action plan as timely as possible and requested an update on this year's action plan in 3 months time**

36. Prevent in Schools

The Scrutiny Board considered a briefing note of the Executive Director for People which briefed members on the Prevent programme in schools.

The Prevent Duty was established in July 2015 as part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act and in particular Section 26 which came into force on 1 July 2015. It outlined the duty for a school or college to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". Schedule 6 confirmed that all schools were covered by the requirements (whether maintained or independent are specified authorities for the purpose of the act). This report outlined those requirements and the implications for schools in the City, the key actions which had been taken to support implementation and proposals for further action.

The Prevent Duty stated that the requirement to have due regard to the risks of radicalisation to support extremism was part of the wider safeguarding duties of schools and public bodies and should be incorporated within their main resources.

The Prevent Duty was closely associated with supporting local communities to resist the threat of violent extremism. It was overseen locally by both the Community Safety Partnership and by both of the Local Safeguarding Boards.

Essentially the Prevent Duty was based on the principle that recognising children can be vulnerable to exploitation and radicalised to support and engage in violent extremism was one part of the safeguarding duties of teachers – and was therefore part of the overall duty of care. There were four key duties for schools:

- Identify local risks
- Identify at risk students
- Work in partnership with other agencies
- Keep children safe online where much of the radicalisation takes place (including phones not just PCs and Laptops)

In addition, all schools must meet the requirements set out in section 78 of the Education Act 2002 and promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural values (SMSC) to develop their pupils in "Self knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence, distinguish right from wrong, contributing to their locality and society, further tolerance and harmony encourage respect for other people and the rule of the law." The achievement against this requirement was assessed through Ofsted.

The principles of the Prevent Duty were clearly outlined in support of the Equality Act – 'Extremism' is defined in the 2011 Prevent strategy "as vocal or active

opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.”

A large part of the response to the Duty had been to provide training and awareness to schools in the City. Since October 2015, and the appointment of the Prevent Co-ordinator, further training had been available. During that time almost 40 schools had been directly trained by the Co-ordinator, with over 1,000 staff attending, the principal form of training was based on the Home Office model known as the Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent.

The Government required all areas to establish a Channel Panel. A multi-agency group, led by the Local Authority, with its principal aim to provide a safeguarding support to individuals who may be at risk of radicalisation.

The Scrutiny Board appreciated the work of officers on Prevent.

The Scrutiny Board questioned Cabinet Members, Deputy Cabinet Members and officers on the following:

- Training in Coventry
- Partnership working
- Faith organisations
- Monitoring training
- Work with Universities

The Board sought clarification that all schools had received quality training.

RESOLVED that

- 1. the Scrutiny Board considered the report and requested that the Cabinet Member congratulate officers and continue to work with partner organisations and agencies in the city**
- 2. data regarding the number of schools delivering prevent training be made available**
- 3. officers monitor the quality of the training where we can gain access to the material**

37. Outstanding Issues

The Scrutiny Board noted the briefing note of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator regarding outstanding actions requested by the Board and that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People referred the Health Visiting recommendation to officers.

38. Work Programme

The Scrutiny Board noted the work programme and requested that we hold a future meeting in a school.

RESOLVED that arrangements be made to hold a future Scrutiny Board meeting in a school.

39. Any Other Business

There were no other items of business.

(Meeting closed at 3.45 pm)



Coventry City Council

Briefing note

To: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)

8th December 2016

Subject: Progress on Children's Services Improvement Plan in response to Ofsted Single Inspection and the Review of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To inform the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) of the progress with the Children's Services Improvement Plan reported to the Children's Services Improvement Board on 14 November 2016. The report is based on data from October 2016, unless stated otherwise. The next Improvement Board will be held on 14th December 2016.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Education and Children's Scrutiny Board (2) are recommended to:

- 1) Consider the progress made to date.
- 2) Receive regular updates from the Children's Services Improvement Board that will include further progress relating to the children's services improvement plan, including feedback from Ofsted and the DfE
- 3) Identify any further recommendations for the appropriate Cabinet Member

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 The Ofsted Inspection of Coventry's Children's Services and the review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), published in March 2014, judged services and the LSCB to be inadequate. The Ofsted report identified a number of priority actions and areas for improvement. In response to the Ofsted report, a Children's Services Improvement Board was established and an Improvement Plan published. The Improvement Plan has been refreshed to take account of the priorities and focus for 2016/17. A one page summary of the improvement Plan is attached in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.2 An experienced Improvement consultant and retired Her Majesty Inspector (HMI), chairs the Children's Services Improvement Board. The Board includes elected Members, Council representatives and representatives from partner agencies in the City as well as a representative from the Department for Education. Progress is reported to the Improvement Board every six weeks.
- 3.3 An Ofsted Monitoring Visit was undertaken on 8th and 9th November 2016, the focus of the visit was on practice within the 'help and protection' judgement with Ofsted doing a deep dive analysis (case tracking) in to six cases selected by Ofsted and one good example case selected by the service. The visit also included a visit to MASH/RAS. The outcome of the

monitoring visit is due to be published in early December 2016 and will be presented to this Scrutiny Board in January 2017.

- 3.4 The Department for Education issued an Improvement Notice on 30th June 2014. The Improvement notice is reviewed every six months. The two year review was held on 30th November 2016 and focused on quality of practice; the effectiveness of the children's services system and partnership working. The formal feedback letter from the Minister on the outcomes of the review is expected during December 2016.
- 3.5 The Council, alongside partner organisations continue a relentless focus on securing improvements in services for children, young people and families to ensure they are safeguarded and achieve positive outcomes.

4 Children's Services Improvement Plan Progress to date

- 4.1 The following progress was reported at the Children's Services Improvement Board on 14 November 2016. Improvement Progress for each theme has been highlighted in each table to highlight improvements more clearly:

4.2 Theme 1 - Early Help and Partnership Working

A summary table is highlighted for each theme highlighting progress completed since September 2016 to the current date:

Summary of Improvement Progress:

- ❖ Initial Contact Service implemented
- ❖ CAF Co-ordinators attached to Schools
- ❖ "Steps to Change" newly developed outcome impact tool is being used
- ❖ Increased intelligence of children who go missing

- 4.3 The reconfiguration of the "front door", which aims to divert families into early help who don't require a social care assessment was implemented in September 2016. The Initial Contact Service is located "in front" of the MASH and assessment services and staffed on a multi-disciplinary basis; workers consider the presenting needs of children and young people and direct them accordingly. This has resulted in significant increase in children being held by eCAF and a reduction in those unnecessarily being progressed to an assessment. This supports the service intention to deliver the right service at the right time in the right place.
- 4.4 From the outset, the City Council has been committed to ensuring that children and young people subject to contacts receive the most appropriate and timely service. Recent history shows that too many young people and children were being misdirected for an assessment. This trend has been reversed with the impact of the new single point of contact service resulting in 25.1% of contacts in September diverted to eCAF compared to 8.4% in April 2016. The service confidently expect that this trend will continue.
- 4.5 Eight CAF coordinators are attached to eighty primary schools to undertake work to build the quality of the assessment and support schools at lower levels of intervention. The effect of this work is less (588) contacts into social care from schools compared to the previous year.
- 4.6 The Early Help strategy has the oversight from Early Help Board members who are representatives from a wide range of partners. At the Improvement Board on 14th November 2016 a presentation between the Head of Early Help and Prevention and Head of a Secondary School articulated the benefits of working in partnership across the Acting Early Sites and the impact this had on his pupils.

- 4.7 In October 2016 Intensive Family Support workers supported 145 children and families across 52 families. In November 2016 time dedicated to the voluntary sector will support mainstreaming and embedding the ethos of The Strengthening Families programme by using best practice case studies with voluntary sector practitioners.
- 4.8 The Steps to Change outcome and impact tool, pilot project has been tested and validated. The analysis indicates that parents have an increased understanding of how their own behaviour influences their children's development. There are key components of learning that demonstrates the greatest breadth of change in their behaviours and from the analysis these are: a greater understanding of how to keep their children safe and secure, the importance of children's emotional well-being and the difference that positive role modelling can have on their children's behaviour. A training package for staff is currently being sourced; training begins in February 2017 with full implementation in March 2017.
- 4.9 Missing response and Return Home Interviews (RHI) has improved dramatically with over 90% of RHI completed in timescale and a higher percentage of RHI being completed, linked with a qualitative understanding of the cohort of children who do not receive a RHI and the reasons why.

5 Theme 2 - Quality and Effectiveness of Practice

Summary of Improvement Progress:

- ❖ Recruited 52 Social Workers
- ❖ Social Worker Student Unit established
- ❖ Established a Virtual Social Worker Academy
- ❖ 336 Staff have completed 2 day Signs of Safety training

- 5.1 The service have made significant progress in recruiting experienced staff to vacancies in Children's Services social work teams. On-going recruitment campaigns/jobs fairs has resulted in 52 social workers being appointed, 46 of these have started in post with a further 6 with planned start dates or recruitment checks being undertaken.
- 5.2 At the end of October 2016, the service have seven vacancies this represents 2% vacancy rate compared with 65 vacancies in December 2015 (22% vacancy rate). Reaching this position has enabled the authority to focus on improving its retention of experienced social workers building the practice expertise of our workforce as part of improving outcomes for children.
- 5.3 The Service has established a Social Work Student Unit, a virtual Social Work Academy and have plans in place for growing our own Social Workers through an 'Aspiring to Social Work' scheme. This will support the agency in recruiting the most able and committed social workers, alongside offering a route for experienced social care practitioners to step up and train as social workers and will be further bolstered by our membership of the West Midlands Teaching partnership.
- 5.4 The academy will ensure that the service are able to assure the progress of newly qualified social workers through the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) curriculum, including preparing them for C&F SW accreditation and help build stronger links with experienced social workers continuous professional development arrangements, assessed career progression and the Practice Educator programme. Whilst retention of staff has improved a primary aim of the Academy will be to reduce the number of staff leaving following completion of the ASYE period.

- 5.5 The number children subject to a child protection plan has stabilised and is currently 518. This is a positive sign and gives a good platform to continue to decrease the numbers based on improved and less risk averse practice.
- 5.6 336 staff have completed training in Signs of Safety, the tool has been introduced and conferences are now facilitating a much more considered and strength based approach. This is helping to make child protection plans more realistic for families with the focus being on working with families together to manage risk. A recent workshop focussed on the need to develop child focused, impact and outcome focused plans.

6 Theme 3 - Quality Assurance and Audit

Summary of Improvement Progress:

- ❖ New Auditing for impact tool introduced
- ❖ Auditor training completed
- ❖ Action Plans for all audits completed

- 6.1 The recent Ofsted Monitoring visit has highlighted that the service overall strengths relate to systems and processes that relate to a strengthened culture of compliance. The areas for development relate to quality of practice and the impact the service are having on our children, this is an area of priority. This is being addressed with Senior Managers.
- 6.2 Audits continue to be undertaken by a number of different sources, including, Practice Improvement Partners and the LSCB. The outcomes of each audit have led to the construction of action plans, focused on using the findings of audits to drive up the quality of practice.
- 6.3 The results of audits have reinforced findings across a range of different services along the child's journey. This has allowed for some triangulation and definitive conclusions in relation to both the strengths and weaknesses in practice across the whole of the Children's Service.

7 Theme 4 - Leadership and Governance

Summary of Improvement Progress:

- ❖ Strategic Leads appointed and commencing January 2017
- ❖ Principal Social Worker has commenced
- ❖ Children's Services vision launched
- ❖ Children's Services Transformation Board in place managing 8 projects
- ❖ Children's Services Strategy – Transformation projects
- ❖ Shadow Boards established for Transformation Board and Improvement Board
- ❖ Caseloads remain steady

- 7.1 Recruitment to a new senior leadership team has been completed with three new strategic leads starting in January 2017. The senior leadership team for Children's Services which includes the Principal Social Worker and Director of Children's Services will drive forward the next phase of improvement.
- 7.2 The appointment of the new Children's Principal Social Worker (PSW) in October 2016 has provided a renewed focus on improving the quality of practice. Future presentations to the improvement board will include the qualitative findings from audit.
- 7.3 Children's Services has developed a vision for the future that all service delivery will be based on. The results of this activity are being addressed through the Children's Services Transformation Programme. The Director of Children's Service presented at the Improvement Board on 14th November 2016 the Children's Service transformation. This

involves eight projects, the programme seeks not only to capture the whole journey of the child and to give voice to intentions for the future, it covers the workforce, what they will do and how they will be recruited, developed and supported into the future so that Coventry becomes the work destination of choice.

- 7.4 A Shadow Board has been established for frontline practitioners to engage and be more involved in future improvements and transformation issues. The first meeting of the Improvement Shadow Board took place on 8th November 2016 and the Transformation Shadow Board will be held in December 2016.
- 7.5 Caseloads remain steady across the service areas and have improved further in RAS. Reporting is in place to identify managerial oversight on cases.

8 Theme 5 - Services for LAC, Care Leavers and Permanency

Summary of Improvement Progress:

- ❖ Children with three or more placements has reduced
- ❖ Timeliness of health assessments and dental checks ups have improved
- ❖ 34 children have been adopted and 18 placed for adoption
- ❖ An Adopters mentoring scheme has been implemented
- ❖ Increase in fostering enquires

- 8.1 In 2015/16 the percentage of children with three or more placements was 14% which was higher than most other West Midlands local authorities and above the all England average (10% in 2015). Although the percentage has dropped to 10% in October 2016, a placement stability action plan has been put in place to ensure that social workers, providers, placements team and commissioners work together effectively to support vulnerable placements.
- 8.2 The number of children in residential care is 82 or 14%. A key priority of the Placement Sufficiency Strategy is to reduce the percentage of children in residential care to 10%. This will be achieved by increasing the number of internal foster placements, market development work with Independent Fostering Agencies, and the delivery of a specialist fostering scheme with a third sector partner. This work has been embedded in the Transformation Programme into order to drive rapid improvements. 20% of Coventry's children are placed more than 20 miles from the city, a slight decrease since 2015/16.
- 8.3 The activity to re-commission external residential care and reconfigure the internal residential service will improve this position. Consultation is underway to modernise and refresh the internal residential care service through the establishment of four new homes based on modern care practice, alongside a new commissioning exercise that will create 30 new local placements and reduce reliance on external and distant provision.
- 8.4 The timeliness of health assessments and dental check-ups, and the completion of Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires have improved (although further work on the latter is needed to integrate it more effectively into the health assessment process) as a result of robust monitoring and tracking. Care leaver health summaries are being routinely produced. Social Care Service Managers are held to account for performance through the dashboard process.
- 8.5 At the end of October 2016, 34 children have been adopted, with an expectation that there will be between 40-45 adoptions by the end of March 2017. During November 2016, jointly with Solihull, an adopters mentoring scheme has been implemented with 12 Coventry adopters. This will give adopters the opportunity to form a network of support.

- 8.6 A marketing and recruitment strategy has been developed to target adopter households who are able to meet the needs of older children and sibling groups. The target for the Fostering Service recruitment strategy is to have 100 more of Coventry's looked after children placed with internal foster carers by April 2018. This will alter the balance of the provision of foster care for Coventry's children and reduce the reliance on external fostering providers. As at April 2016 there were 145 looked after children placed with 147 fostering households. Not all fostering households have placements at all times.
- 8.7 Since April 2016, the number of enquiries about fostering has increased by over 21% compared to the same period last year and overall 220 fostering enquiries have been taken. These enquiries have resulted in 41 fostering assessments being initiated of which 26 are ongoing. Although some inactive fostering households have resigned from the service, this has been balanced by 15 new fostering households being approved this year to date, resulting in a net gain of 3 approved households, and there has been an overall growth of 21 children placed in internal fostering placements, giving a current total of 166.
- 8.8 The service is currently working with 372 young people (November 2016), of which 273 are care leavers aged over 18 and 93 are eligible young people. The service is in touch with 96.2% of care leavers which represents an improvement from the reported figure of 89.1% in December 2015.

9 Communication

- 9.1 The e-newsletter continues to be produced focusing on Children's Services ahead of Ofsted re-inspection. This is issued to all staff in Children's Services, all partners, senior managers and Members to ensure everyone is aware of the progress made so far, what has still to be achieved and the role all employees can play in supporting the service in achieving a better Ofsted result. In addition to this, the Director of Children's Services completes a regular blog, hold open sessions for all staff and gets out and about visiting teams and talking to staff.

Authors:

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Appendix 1

Children's Services Improvement Plan on a page 2016-17

Theme	What we want to achieve	Our priorities for 2016-17
1 Early Help & Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ An enhanced transformed Early Help Service ❖ Full Multi Agency Engagement in CAF ❖ MASH is embedded & information shared effectively ❖ Children and young people who go missing and are vulnerable to CSE are protected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Getting the Early Help Strategy working so we can step cases down safely ➤ Implementing the "Steps to Change" outcome impact tool ➤ Working with partners to review the Front Door and contacts into the MASH ➤ Increased intelligence of children who go missing vulnerable to CSE
2 Quality and Effectiveness of Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Improve timeliness and recording of Assessments ❖ Ensure children are safeguarded ❖ Recruit and retain an effective workforce ❖ Learning and Development impacting positively on practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reduce the number of assessments that have an outcome of "no further action" ➤ Maintain a relentless focus on consistency and quality of practice ➤ Continue an active programme of recruitment for experienced social workers ➤ Promote and deliver an effective retention offer ➤ Develop a Social Work Academy
3 Quality Assurance and Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Learning from regular audits and demonstrating improved practice ❖ Learning from User Feedback ❖ Regular accurate Performance Information ❖ Strengthen care planning function of Independent Reviewing Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continue to improve the quality of practice through the audit and review cycle ➤ Launch Children's Services Health Check and repeat annually ➤ Consolidate and expand the use of performance data at strategic and operational levels ➤
4 Leadership and Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Accountability and oversight by Chief Executive and Council Leadership ❖ Effective Management Oversight of Cases ❖ Effective Supervision and reflective practice ❖ Manageable Caseloads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Maintain the challenge function of the Children's Services Improvement Board ➤ Re-design Children's Service and deliver on transformation projects ➤ Implement a Children's Services Strategy for 2016-2018 ➤ Continue to monitor social work caseloads to ensure appropriate and manageable
5 Services for LAC, Care Leavers and Permanency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Improved service outcomes for LAC and care leavers ❖ Health of LAC ❖ Increase the number of children adopted ❖ Increase recruitment of foster workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implementing the Corporate Parenting Strategy and Placement Sufficiency Strategy ➤ Working with commissioning colleagues and partners to ensure health assessments and dental checks are completed ➤ Continue to improve timeliness of adoption ➤ Continue with the Foster placements campaign

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Coventry City Council

Briefing note

To: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)

Date: 8th December 2016

Subject: Improving and Redesigning City Council Children's Residential Care Provision

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To inform the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board on the different options for the reconfiguration of the City Council Children's Residential Care Provision.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board are recommended to:
- 1) Consider the options for the redesign as proposed in Appendix 1.
 - 2) Promote and encourage participation in the consultation to those who may be affected by any of the proposed changes.
 - 3) Identify any further comments or recommendations for the Cabinet Member.

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 Children's Internal Residential Care Redesign is one of eight projects which form part of the Children's Services Transformation Programme, and sets out to improve the quality of children's homes provided by the Council, whilst realising revenue benefits. It is planned that the redesign of the service will reduce spend on external residential provision by creating additional internal capacity by utilising the existing resource tied up in the current provision. The proposal is to provide homes with additional capacity, higher levels of occupancy and improved quality of care that represent better value for money.
- 3.2 The report, at Appendix 1, recommends a period of stakeholder consultation to explore options for the reconfiguration of the service by providing 4 smaller homes for children to replace the existing provision at Gravel Hill and The Grange children's homes. The proposal is based on an identified need to create a more coherent, modern and suitable model of provision for the future care of Coventry's children and young people who require a residential home while they are being looked after by the local authority.
- 3.3 Members of the Board are requested to consider the proposals contained in Appendix 1 as part of the stakeholder consultation.

Keith Francis, Improvement Partner, Children's Services
Lisa Lawson, Programme Development Manager
People Directorate

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Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

16 November, 2016

Name of Cabinet Member:
Cabinet Member for Children and Young People- Cllr Ed Ruane

Director Approving Submission of the report:
Executive Director of People

Ward(s) affected:
City-wide

Title: Improving and Redesigning City Council Children's Residential Care Provision

Is this a key decision?

No – this is a decision to proceed to consultation.

Executive Summary:

The Ofsted Inspection of Coventry's Children's Services published in March 2014 judged the three areas of 'Looked After Children', 'Leaving Care' and 'Adoption Performance' as requiring improvement. The Improvement Notice issued to Coventry City Council on 30th June 2014 included the requirement to address the areas of improvement identified by the inspection of services for children undertaken by Ofsted, including services for children looked after.

In response to the need to improve Children's Services in Coventry, The Children's Services Strategy 2016 – 2018 was developed to set out a Vision for Children's Services and a detailed transformation programme that supports the improvement of Children's Services and places children at the heart of everything we do.

The improvement of these services sits within the context of a significant savings pressure for Children's Services with a requirement to achieve in excess of £7 million in 2017/18, rising to in excess of £11 million from 2018/19.

The Children's Services Transformation Programme converts the vision for the service into action that will ensure sustainable service improvement in Coventry. The programme comprises of eight discrete projects, largely falling under the 2 broad themes of workforce redesign and looked after children placements.

Children's Internal Residential Care Redesign is one of the eight projects and sets out to improve the quality of children's homes provided by the Council, whilst realising revenue benefits. It is planned that the redesign of the service will reduce spend on external residential provision by creating additional internal capacity by utilising the existing resource tied up in the current provision. The proposal is to provide homes with additional capacity, higher levels of occupancy and improved quality of care that represent better value for money.

This report recommends a period of stakeholder consultation to explore options for the reconfiguration of the service by providing 4 smaller homes for children to replace the existing provision at Gravel Hill and The Grange children's homes. The proposal is based on an identified

need to create a more coherent, modern and suitable model of provision for the future care of Coventry's children and young people who require a residential home while they are being looked after by the local authority.

Recommendations

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People is recommended to support a period of consultation on the proposal to change the way that Council operated Children's Residential Care Homes are provided.

List of Appendices included:

There are no appendices included in this report

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny? No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

Yes, Corporate Parenting Board

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Improving and Redesigning City Council Children's Residential Care Provision

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1** Coventry currently operates two children's homes for children and young people assessed as requiring residential care. These homes are Gravel Hill and The Grange, together registered for a maximum of 12 children of either gender aged between 10 and 18 years. Gravel Hill is used as a short-term assessment centre and offers a 12 week programme and The Grange offers medium to long term placements for those assessed as needing residential care as opposed to a family based placement. This report sets out the proposal for an alternative and forward thinking option for the future service delivery of residential care provision for children in Coventry. The resolution being sought is for a period of consultation with the Young People, staff and key stakeholders and partners to be undertaken on these proposals.
- 1.2** This proposal would see the disposal of two existing children's homes (The Grange and Gravel Hill) in their current form and the identification of four properties (5 or 6 bedroomed) for the redesigned service. This will include acquisition of suitable properties and the intention would be to use capital receipts from the sale of home(s) to purchase the new provision.
- 1.3** The existing children's homes incur average weekly placement costs which are significantly higher than the national average. Coventry homes average £5,405 per week (full cost based on average capacity in the year to January 2016) and Other LA homes average £2,964 per week (DfE 2014).
- 1.4** The existing homes do not closely mirror the domestic setting of a family residence but provide a more institutionalised living environment with industrial sized kitchens, large office space for staff and domestic staff employed to undertake the cleaning of the properties and cooking of meals. In comparison, the proposal to provide four smaller residential homes would provide homes that offer good quality care in a group setting which replicates as much as possible day to day life in a thriving, happy and healthy family.

2. Rationale for Change

- 2.1** The current provision offers a maximum occupancy of 10 beds (4 registered at Gravel Hill and 6 the effective operating maximum at The Grange).
- 2.2** The proposed new model comprising of 4 X 6 or 5 bedroom homes would offer up to 16 placements if suitable properties are available in the area (either through the purchase of 4 properties, or purchase of 3 and a remodelling of Gravel Hill).
- 2.3** There are revenue benefits as a result of this proposal as detailed in Financial Implications section. In addition to savings benefits the proposed new model would achieve the following;
 - enable more flexibility to meet the needs of our children living in residential care
 - enable the retention of an in-house provision which gives a greater degree of control

- increased capacity and the potential to avoid up to 6 external and distant residential placements
- increased local provision to ensure continuity of education and health care and
- the purchase of properties that are fit for purpose and meet service requirements.

3. Options Considered

- 3.1 Option 1 - Recommended Proposal** - Undertake a period of consultation on the preferred option to close the two existing children's homes (The Grange and Gravel Hill) in their current form and the identification/acquisition of four properties (5 or 6 bedroomed) for the redesigned service. Utilise any capital receipts from the sale of current property(s) to purchase the new provision. Establish four small homes with a maximum of four residents operating in a way that more closely resembles family life, where shared activity is paramount, where the creation of close nurturing relationships is emphasised and where the risk of institutional life is eliminated, or at least significantly minimised. These will be homes where adults and children interact continuously, where menus are planned and food is cooked together, where individual and group activities are negotiated and undertaken, where pride and ownership of the property is a jointly shared and where there is shared responsibility for upkeep, maintenance and neighbourliness. These will be less children's homes and more homes for children.
- 3.2 Option 2** – retain the current two homes with their existing Statements of Purpose and operating procedures representing a “no change option”. This option is not recommended. In brief the homes use an outmoded and dated model of residential care practice, considered to be overly institutional by modern standards and in addition do not currently offer good value for money in comparison to residential care provided either by other local authorities or voluntary or private sector providers. Occupancy levels have been relatively low, as a result of which staff resource levels are relatively high and these factors have led to a weekly placement cost which is not sustainable.
- 3.3 Option 3** – dispense with internal residential provision altogether and simply commission placements according to identified need via a combination of block contracts, framework agreement provision and spot purchase from the market. Whilst this is a position which has been adopted by a number of local authorities it is not considered to represent the best way forward in Coventry for the following reasons:
- A greater degree of control of placement supply is retained by having internal provision
 - Retaining in-house provision allows for greater flexibility in overall service delivery and the use of controllable resources
 - The proposed model increases overall capacity and occupancy which reduces the need for more expensive external placements
 - Retention of capital assets which may well appreciate in value over time
 - Increases local provision and better ensures continuity of education and healthcare
- 3.4** A consultation is proposed in order to seek the views of the main stakeholders involved;
- Children, young people and their carers
 - Health professionals
 - Education professionals
 - Police
 - External Agencies

- Social Care staff

Consultation will be undertaken through face to face meetings and events and also via an on line survey.

It is proposed that during the consultation period further exploration of the option to utilise Gravel Hill as one of the proposed four homes providing future placements is undertaken. Gravel Hill is already owned by the council and is the right size of property for the proposal but would require remodelling to ensure it could fit the new model of service provision. More detailed work is required in order to decide whether or not this approach would offer value for money and achieve both the service improvement and savings required.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1** This report is seeking permission to consult on the outline proposals being described and further explore delivery options. If agreed the consultation programme outlined above will be conducted throughout November and December 2016. Results from this consultation will be collated and analysed with a view to a report being presented to Cabinet early in 2017. The implementation phase for any decision made following the consultation will be undertaken in 2017.

5. Comments from Executive Director of Resources

5.1 Financial implications

- 5.1.1 Cost benefits would be realised due to placing more children in internal provision without incurring additional costs, so therefore needing less external provision. This is estimated to be a reduction in cost of between £500K and £1M and the internal residential project has an annual revenue target of £750K. The financial savings hinge on the ability to achieve a high level of occupancy on an ongoing basis (in excess of 85%). This is considered to be achievable based on the provision being less institutionalised and the aim for this provision to be a long-term provision for children with residential care needs.

- 5.1.2 In addition to revenue there will also be capital implications. The implementation of the project depends on the disposal and sale of The Grange, and possibly Gravel Hill (depending on the outcome of further exploration). Any proceeds from the sale of the asset(s) would then be used to purchase/remodel the new provision however there is potentially a timing issue and bridging finance may be required to ensure continuity of provision. The expectation is that the cost of purchasing and remodelling new/existing properties will not exceed proceeds from sale of the current asset(s).

5.2 Legal implications

- 5.2.1 The Children Act 1989 (Section 22(4)) requires the Council to consult with young people and seek their views on decisions affecting them. The proposal will also require formal consultation with staff and their trade unions.
- 5.2.2 The Children Act 1989 (Section 22G) requires local authorities to provide sufficient accommodation within the authority area which meets the needs of children that the local authority are looking after.

- 5.2.3 Public authority decision makers are under a non-delegable ongoing duty to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not. (Public Sector Equality duty).
- 5.2.4 The proposed consultation and resulting equality assessment is intended to enable the decision makers to consider the impact and public response to the proposal and any alternative proposals raised. The product of the consultation must be conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is made.
- 5.2.5 Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 and the statutory guidance issued under it imposes duty on a local authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way on which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 5.2.6 Regulation 49 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 requires the responsible individual and or the registered person to give notice in writing to Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Ofsted as soon as it is practicable to do so if a registered provider proposes to cease to carry on or manage the home.
- 5.2.7 There will be other legal implications depending on the final proposal following consultation.

6. Other Implications

6.1 Property Implications

- 6.1.1 The property implications of this proposal are as follows. The existing children's homes at Gravel Hill and Grange Avenue will be declared surplus and disposed of at an estimated disposal value of £1.6m to fund the acquisition of four, five or six Bedroomed detached houses in the Coventry Area. It is assumed that the properties to be acquired will be in good order with little requirement to spend on them, other than to ensure fire, Health and safety and Children's Homes Regulations compliance.
- 6.1.2 A desk top survey of available properties in Coventry has indicated that there are some buildings on the market in the City, but availability for purchase will obviously be market dependent at the point when the decision to acquire is made.
- 6.1.3 The four replacement properties are assumed to incur the same property running costs of the current two properties (£82,000 per annum). There will be some overlap of running costs as it will be necessary to acquire the replacement properties before the disposal of the existing ones. If there are additional property running costs these will impact on the savings achieved.
- 6.1.4 Further work needs to be done with planning colleagues to ensure what if any planning permissions are required for the premises to be acquired and disposed.
- 6.1.5 The Council invested £330,000 in 2010/11 converting Gravel Hill into its current configuration.

6.2 How will this contribute to the Council's priorities?

- 6.2.1 This proposed service development would make proactive contributions in a number of areas for Council priority. At a direct level, the newly configured arrangements will have immediate and sustainable impact to outcomes for children in care. The new model will provide improved quality of accommodation than currently exists, which will be located in established residential areas with good access to transport and easy availability of community resources and activities. This will enable our children to be in a better position to make positive contributions to both their own lives and the wider neighbourhood in which they live.
- 6.2.2 We aspire to look after our children in care within or close to Coventry. This allows for the maintenance of family contact and continuity of both education and healthcare. It also allows for a seamless transition towards independence for those children aged over 16 who will most likely be looking to assume adulthood and settle within the city. They will be close to any work experience, training and/or employment opportunities that may become available and will have ready access to their Social Worker or Personal Adviser situated within localities.

6.3 How is risk being managed?

- 6.3.1 A Transformation Programme Delivery Board meets on a monthly basis with representation from all Children's Services Teams. An Internal Residential Care Redesign Project Team meets regularly to progress actions and manage identified risks. A project risk register has been established for the project. The Project Team Manager reports to the Transformation Board at each monthly meeting sharing a Highlight Report which give updates on progress, identified risks and mitigation. Risks will continue to be identified, mitigations sought and impact managed through this process.

6.4 What is the impact on the organisation?

6.4.1 Staffing Impacts

The proposals outlined will impact on staff. There may be some staffing reductions and changes to working practice and hours. The proposed model would remove the Waking Nights arrangements (unless exceptional circumstances require this to be in place) and introduce Sleep-in positions. There would no longer be a requirement for the Team Leader, Cook and Domestic posts. Staff and Trade Unions will be fully consulted on the specific content of the proposals. Any changes will be managed in accordance with the City Council's agreement on management of change which aims to manage staffing reductions through management of vacancies, reviews of temporary contracts and avoidance of compulsory redundancies through redeployment or Early Retirement Voluntary Redundancy opportunities where possible.

6.5 Equalities / EIA

- 6.5.1 Officers will undertake an Equality Consultation Assessment as part of the consultation period for consideration when the final recommendations are made.

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

6.6.1 Any impact on partner agencies as a result of these proposals will be minimal and is expected to be positive. The increase in capacity arising from the proposals will ensure more young people in care placed locally and therefore have improved access to wraparound support services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Youth Service and related support provision. Community Safety will be enhanced through a careful property search and locality assessments.

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www.coventry.gov.uk/meetings



Coventry City Council

Briefing note

To: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)

Date: 8th December 2016

Subject: Education Travel Assistance Policy Changes – Public Consultation

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To inform the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board of changes to the education travel assistance policy.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board are recommended to:
- 1) Consider the proposed changes to the travel assistance policy in Appendix A
 - 2) Promote and encourage participation in the consultation to those who may be affected by any of the proposed changes.
 - 3) Identify any further comments or recommendations for the appropriate Cabinet Member.

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 Coventry City Council has statutory responsibilities for travel assistance for eligible children and young people. However, it currently over-provides traditional forms of transport for children and young people compared to statutory duties and the provision made by other local authorities.
- 3.2 There are two key consequences of this. Firstly, some children and young people are missing out on the opportunity to develop independent travel skills. Independent travel skills gained in adolescence can be taken forward into adult life. Secondly, there is significant forecast overspend on the Council's Home to School Transport budget (2016/17 quarter 1 forecast £3.5m spend against a £3.1m budget). Current policies and practice are not aligned with national statutory duties.
- 3.3 The Cabinet Member report at Appendix A recommends a public consultation on a revised travel assistance policy (for school aged children and young people aged 5-16 years old) and an amendment to the existing post 16 travel assistance policy that includes the levying of a travel assistance charge for post-16 travel with exemption for low-income families.
- 3.4 At his meeting on the 10th November, the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills approved a public consultation from 21st November 2016 to 13th January 2017, leading to a report back to the Cabinet on 7th March 2017, on the following:
- a) A revised Travel Assistance Policy (Statutory School Age Children) which aligns the statutory walking distance eligibility criteria to national levels and has a stronger focus

on the Council's travel assistance on public transport and innovative travel options aimed at reducing dependence on minibus and taxi options as appropriate.

- b) A new Travel Assistance Policy for post 16 and post 19 students that fully reflects current statutory requirements. This policy includes a contributory charge towards the cost of travel assistance for all post-16 students whose families do not meet the criteria for low income household concessions.

3.5 Members of the Board are recommended to consider the proposals and feedback in response to the consultation. More information and the consultation questionnaire can be found here:

<http://www.coventry.gov.uk/travelconsult>

Appendix A – Cabinet Member Report – Education Travel Assistance Policy Changes – Public Consultation

Appendix B – Consultation Information Sheet

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Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

10 November 2016

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills - Councillor K Maton

Director Approving Submission of the report:

People

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Education Travel Assistance Policy Changes – Public Consultation

Is this a key decision?

No – although this matter affects all wards, the proposals are for approval of a period of consultation and therefore not a key decision.

Executive Summary:

Coventry City Council has statutory responsibilities for travel assistance for eligible children and young people. However, it currently over-provides traditional forms of transport for children and young people compared to statutory duties and the provision made by other local authorities.

There are two key consequences of this. Firstly, some children and young people are missing out on the opportunity to develop independent travel skills. Independent travel skills gained in adolescence can be taken forward into adult life. Secondly, there is significant forecast overspend on the Council's Home to School Transport budget (2016/17 quarter 1 forecast £3.5m spend against a £3.1m budget). Current policies and practice are not aligned with national statutory duties.

This report recommends a public consultation on a revised travel assistance policy (for school aged children and young people aged 5-16 years old) and an amendment to the existing post 16 travel assistance policy that includes the levying of a travel assistance charge for post-16 travel with exemption for low-income families.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills is recommended to approve a public consultation from 21st November 2016 to 13th January 2017, leading to a report back to the Cabinet on 7th March 2017, on the following:

- a) A revised Travel Assistance Policy (Statutory School Age Children) which aligns the statutory walking distance eligibility criteria to national levels and has a stronger focus on the Council's

travel assistance on public transport and innovative travel options aimed at reducing dependence on minibus and taxi options as appropriate.

- b) A new Travel Assistance Policy for post 16 and post 19 students that fully reflects current statutory requirements. This policy includes a contributory charge towards the cost of travel assistance for all post-16 students whose families do not meet the criteria for low income household concessions.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1: New Travel Assistance Policy (for children aged 5-16 years old of school age)

Appendix 2: New Post 16 and Post 19 Travel Assistance Policy for students accessing Further Education

Appendix 3: Equality Community Analysis

Background papers:

None

Other useful documents:

- Department for Education: Home to school travel and transport guidance – Statutory guidance for local authorities July 2014
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445407/Home_to_School_Travel_and_Transport_Guidance.pdf
- Department for Education: Post-16 transport to education and training – Statutory guidance for local authorities (February 2014).
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/277016/Post-16_Transport_Guidance.pdf

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Education Travel Assistance Policy Changes – Public Consultation

1. Context (or background)

1.1 Coventry City Council has a statutory responsibility to assist eligible children and young people of statutory school age to travel to school. In certain limited circumstances, this duty may extend to young people age 16 to 18 and 19 to up to 25, attending Further Education institutions. It is evident that the Council currently makes provision for children and young people who do not meet the statutory eligibility criteria and that the mode of travel assistance is commonly in the form of door to door minibus or taxi.

1.2 Current policies and practice do not align with current national statutory duties and guidance. The Council does not currently have a post 19 Travel Assistance policy, this is a new statutory requirement.

1.3 There are two key consequences of current practice. Firstly, children and young people who have the potential to travel independently are not given the opportunity to do so and thereby are not equipped with the necessary skills to independently access their community and the workplace in adulthood. Secondly, over-provision has resulted in a significant projected overspend on the Council's Home to School Transport budget (2016/17 quarter 1 forecast spend of £3.5m on a £3.1m budget). The average spend per child, is currently £4,260 per annum. This expenditure is set in the context of significant financial cuts to the Council's budget.

1.4 Children and young people of statutory school age (5-16 years old)

1.5 Statutory guidance and duties

1.5.1 The Council has a statutory duty to make such travel arrangements as it considers necessary for eligible children and young people to facilitate their attendance at a qualifying school free of charge. These are set out in the Education Act 1996 and in the Department for Education's *Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance – Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities July 2014*.

1.5.2 The guidance states that in order to comply with their home to school transport duties local authorities must promote the use of sustainable travel and transport and make transport arrangements for all eligible children. There are four factors that the Council needs to take into consideration when assessing eligibility: statutory walking distance, SEN, disability or mobility, unsafe routes and extended rights.

1.5.3 Statutory walking distance

A child will be an eligible child where the distance from the child's home to the nearest qualifying school with available places that provides an education suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs, exceeds statutory walking distances.. Statutory walking distance is measured by the shortest route along which a child, accompanied as necessary, may walk safely. Local authorities must offer travel assistance according to the statutory walking distance criteria if:

a) The child lives 2 miles or more away from their nearest suitable school measured by statutory walking distance and they are under 8 years of age (and of compulsory school age); or

b) The child or young person lives 3 miles or more away from their nearest suitable school measured by statutory walking distance and they are 8 years of age or over (and of compulsory school age).

1.5.4 **SEN, disability or mobility**

Local authorities must provide travel assistance for all children who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school because of their mobility problems or because of associated health and safety issues related to their special educational needs (SEN) or disability. Eligibility for such children should be assessed on an individual basis to identify their particular travel assistance requirements.

1.5.5 **Unsafe routes**

Local authorities must make travel assistance arrangements for all children who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to their nearest suitable school because the nature of the route is deemed unsafe to walk.

1.5.6 **Extended rights (low family income)**

This refers to eligibility related to family income levels. Local authorities must offer free travel assistance where pupils are entitled to free school meals or if their parents are in receipt of maximum Working Tax Credit if there is compliance with any of the following:

- a) The nearest suitable schools is beyond 2 miles from the home address (for children over the age of 8 and under 11);
- b) The school is between 2 and 6 miles from the home address (if aged 11-16 and there are not three or more suitable nearer schools);
- c) The school is between 2 and 15 miles from the home address and is the nearest school preferred on grounds of religion or belief (aged 11-16).

1.6 **Current delivery and approach**

1.6.1 The Council currently provides travel assistance to 711 children and young people aged 5-16 years with special education needs and disabilities which is forecast to cost £2.86m in 2016/17 including escort costs. Of this, £0.68m is spent on taxis, £1.96m on minibuses, £0.22m on personal travel budgets. Work has been undertaken over the past 3 months to improve non-policy processes and monitoring to reduce costs.

1.6.2 The Council currently makes provision in excess of its statutory duties. Current policy and practice for children and young people with SEN, disability and mobility eligibility apply a one mile walking distance eligibility for travel assistance to a special school and a two mile walking distance for eligibility to primary schools age 8 to 11. An analysis of transport provision identifies an over-use of door to door taxis and minibuses when public transport options or pick-up points may be suitable.

1.7 **Proposals**

The proposal is that the Council revises its Travel Assistance Policies for children of statutory school age, post 16 and post 19 student. The proposed policy for statutory school age:

- a) Aligns the statutory walking distance eligibility criteria to statutory duty levels;
- b) Makes provision for exceptional circumstances;
- c) Sets out the decision making process for the type of travel assistance offered;
- d) Ensures that choice is tempered with the need to ensure the efficient and effective use of public resources;
- e) Promotes independent travel, the use of public transport and other innovative travel options
- f) Reviews the current personal travel budget to equalise entitlement to 45p per mile within City and 25p per mile out of City

- 1.7.1 An analysis of the impact of applying the proposed national statutory walking distance criteria to current users, identifies that 343 children from a cohort of 711 children and young people would no longer qualify for travel assistance on the grounds of distance. However, it is estimated that 225 of the 343 children would satisfy other eligibility criteria as a consequence of the severity of their SEN or mobility. It is estimated that 118 children and young people would no longer qualify for travel assistance. **This would mean that if changes were implemented, an estimated 118 (16%) of current users would not qualify for travel assistance as a result of these proposals.**
- 1.7.2 These estimates are based on the assumption that children in the following categories are likely to remain **eligible** for travel assistance: profound and multiple learning difficulties; severe learning disability; complex communication disorder that has a severe impact on cognition; sensory impaired (registered blind or profoundly deaf); severe social, emotional and mental health difficulties requiring supervision to secure personal safety, physical disability that significantly impedes mobility e.g. wheelchair users.
- 1.7.3 Children with assessed needs in the following categories, are likely to be **ineligible for** travel assistance as a consequence of their SEN: moderate learning difficulties; speech and language difficulties; moderate social communication difficulties; moderate social emotional mental health difficulties moderate visual Impairment; moderate hearing loss. However, current users may still meet eligibility criteria in other areas, specifically distance, low income/extended rights, unsafe route or exceptional circumstances.
- 1.7.4 Where children are ineligible, parents/carers would take responsibility for ensuring their child's attendance at school.
- 1.7.5 The application of the policy would require families to formally apply for travel assistance on an annual basis. The Council would assess the most appropriate way of delivering travel assistance on an individual level applying the criteria set out in the policy. It is envisaged that this process would provide an opportunity for families independently or together to identify innovative modes of alternative travel and that Council arranged provision would prioritise the development of independent travel skills and the use of public transport.
- 1.7.6 It is proposed that the new policies would be implemented from 1 April 2017 onwards for new applicants and that the policy would be fully implemented for existing users with effect 1st September 2017.

1.8 **Travel Assistance for 16-18**

1.8.1 **Statutory guidance**

1.8.2 The Council's statutory duties are set out in the Education Act 1996 and the DfE publication: *Post-16 transport to education and training – Statutory guidance for local authorities (February 2014)*. This guidance states that the overall intention of the 16-18 transport duty is to:

- ensure that learners of sixth form age are able to access the education and training of their choice; and
- ensure that, if support for access is required, this will be assessed and provided where necessary.

1.8.3 Key factors set out are: the needs of those who could not access education or training provision if no arrangements were made; the need to ensure that young people have reasonable opportunities to choose between different establishments at which education and training is provided; the distance from the learner's home to establishments of

education and training; the journey time to access different establishments; the cost of transport to the establishments in question; alternative means of facilitating attendance at establishments; non-transport solutions to facilitate learner access; and preferences based on religion.

1.8.4 The statutory guidance states that local authorities may ask learners and their parents for a contribution to transport costs. The guidance goes on to say that when exercising this discretion local authorities should:

- ensure that any contribution is affordable for learners and their parents
- ensure that there are arrangements in place to support those families on low income
- take into account the likely duration of learning and ensure that transport policies do not adversely impact particular groups.

1.8.5 The guidance also states local authorities may take receipt of 16-19 bursary funding into account when assessing an individual's need for financial help with transport.

1.8.6 **Current delivery and approach**

1.8.7 The Council currently provides travel assistance to 110 young people aged 16 years and over at a forecast cost for 2016/17 of £0.60m. Of this, £0.52m is forecast spend on minibuses, £0.05m on taxis and £0.03m on Personal Travel Budgets.

1.8.8 Where young people have high needs, travel options are considered on an individual basis. Young people with high, needs but able to travel more independently, receive a bus pass. More vulnerable young people with physical/cognitive issues are offered assisted transport. Where young people are transported to out of area settings, they travel together in the same taxis where possible and drop off and collection times are harmonised to minimise journeys and costs.

1.8.9 The Council's approach is aligned to the statutory guidance, however, Coventry City Council does not currently ask for a parental contribution towards travel assistance.

1.8.10 The forecast average cost per young person of post-16 transport in Coventry for 2016/17 is £5,450.

1.9 **Proposals**

1.9.1 The proposed change would require learners and their parents, who can afford to pay, to contribute to the transport costs.

1.9.2 The proposed contribution is £600 per year, which can be paid in half-termly instalments of £100. The proposed contribution is based on West Midlands Local Authorities average charge. It is proposed that families on low income are exempt from this charge.

1.9.3 Subject to approval, it is proposed that the contributory charge would apply from 1 September 2017 for all post-16 students applying for travel assistance.

2. **Options considered and recommended proposal**

2.1 The option of no change in respect of travel assistance for statutory school age has been considered. However, this would mean a continuance of over-provision resulting in a growing over-spend against budget. All other West Midlands Local Authorities have successfully applied statutory eligibility criteria, evidencing that a change in policy is both justified and will meet need. A continuance of current provision will impede the development of independent travel skills. This option is not therefore recommended.

2.2 The option of no change in respect of post 16 travel assistance has been considered. However, non-SEN students have to take responsibility for securing attendance at post 16 provisions within school or college at their own expense. The Equality Act demands equality of access for disabled people, it does not require services to provide an advantage. Students with a disability receive mobility allowances to secure their access to the community, it is therefore difficult to justify delivering a free service. This option is not therefore recommended. The proposed contribution of £600 per annum is deemed to be affordable and represents an average of other local authorities contribution levels.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

3.1 No formal consultation has taken place. However, stakeholder workshops have been held to seek the views of young people, parents and schools in developing the proposals.

3.2 Cabinet Member is asked to approve a public consultation on these proposals. The results of the consultation undertaken will be reported to Cabinet on 14th February 2017.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

Date	Action
21 st November 2016	Consultation launched
21 st November 2016– 13 th January 2017	Opportunities for children, young people and parents to respond to the consultation through a range of accessible events
13 th January 2017	Consultation ends (consultation guidance is that consultations should last at least 28 working days during term time and that the consultation should be extended to take into account of any school holidays that may occur during the period of consultation).
21 st November 2016- February 2017	On-going analysis of consultation feedback leading to cabinet report
7 th March 2017	Cabinet decision
1 st April 2017 onwards	Phased implementation
1 September 2017	New policy applies for pupils starting at a new school
1 September 2017	New policy applies for post-16 students

5. Comments from Executive Director of Resources

5.1 Financial implications

Spend on SEN Transport provision in 2015/16 amounted to £3.8m against a budget of £3.3m resulting in a £0.5m overspend. Spend has reduced in 16/17 as a result of work to review processes and find efficiencies within the existing policy and the forecast spend was £3.5m at quarter 1. However the forecast overspend for 16/17 is still £0.4m which is due to planned budgetary savings being applied.

Based on the proposed changes to the travel assistance policy it is forecast that of the 821 children and young people currently receiving travel assistance 118 school age children and 10 post 16 children will no longer receive assistance. The table below details the forecast reductions in spend:

Proposal	Forecast
----------	----------

	Reduction (£m)
Change to distance criteria in line with statutory guidance	0.43
Revision of door to door transport to the provision of bus passes for secondary age young people attending special school provision, able to access public transport	0.06
Revised mileage rate for Personal Transport Budgets	0.08
Proposed charging policy for Post 16 (Sixth form age)	0.03
Total Forecast Reduction in Spend	0.60

The forecast reduction in spend for 2017/18 is forecast to be in the region of £0.40m as a result of the proposed September 2017 implementation. The full forecast reductions will be realised from 2018/19 ongoing.

The methodology used to forecast savings is based on estimated reductions in the numbers of children and young people transported as a result of the proposed changes to eligibility criteria. This will result in reductions to routes and also vehicles. The actual savings delivered will be affected by the cohort of young people being transported and the ability to reduce routes and vehicles in line with estimates.

Once the policy changes are implemented the SEN Transport budgets will be monitored through the budgetary control process to evaluate the actual level of savings achieved. In addition to the proposed policy changes work continues to promote existing alternative transport options such as personal transport budgets (PTB) and independent travel training which will help to promote independence for pupils and assist in reducing spend.

5.2 Legal implications

The Education Act 1996 sets out the Council's statutory duties to promote sustainable modes of travel to meet the school travel needs in its area (s508A). S 508B sets out the councils statutory duties in respect of compulsory school age children who fall to be considered as eligible children and in respect of whom the council has the duty to make such travel arrangements to and from the child or young person's qualifying school as the Council considers necessary free of charge. The Council must publish its general arrangements and policies in respect of transport for children of compulsory school age setting out those arrangements which relate to its statutory duties and those which are provided on a discretionary basis. Where changes to school travel arrangements are proposed the Council is required to consult widely on proposed changes with all interested parties for at least 28 working days during term time, and this period should be extended to take account of any school holiday periods that fall within the 28 day period. The Council is also required by s 509AA of the Education Act 1996 to prepare and publish a transport policy statement setting out the transport arrangements for persons of 6th form age by the 31 May each year. The Council has a duty to consult with stakeholders in the development of that policy statement.

The Council must also set out in a transport policy statement the arrangements that it considers necessary to make in respect of relevant young adults (those with statements, Education Health and Care plans or subject to a learning difficulty assessment aged 19-25).

6. Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?

6.2 How is risk being managed?

Risks are being managed through project management processes.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

The impact on the organisation is minimal.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

The Equality and Communities Analysis (ECA) outlined in Appendix 3 sets out the known equality impacts prior to the start of the consultation. These will be updated throughout the consultation and a revised will be included in the cabinet report of 14th February 2017.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

The impact on the environment/climate change is minimal. The proposals could lead to fewer vehicle journeys.

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

There are no specific implications for partner organisations.

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This report is published on the council's website: www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings

Appendices

Appendix 1: New Travel Assistance Policy (for children aged 5-16 years old of school age)

Appendix 2: Post-16 (sixth Form age) Travel Policy

Appendix 3: Equality Community Analysis

APPENDIX 1

Coventry Travel Assistance Policy Statutory School Age (5-16 years old)

Version: For Public Consultation, November 2016

Proposed policy for public consultation

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Coventry City Council (the “Council”) is committed to enabling all children to lead independent healthy lives, feel safe and secure and achieve their full potential. For children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, this includes enabling them to develop the skills to live an ordinary life in adulthood, and fulfil their entitlement to independent living and employment.
- 1.2 This Policy sets out the entitlement for children and young people of statutory school age (5 to 16), who have special educational needs or a disability to home to school travel assistance. This policy reflects the Department for Education’s *Home to school travel and transport guidance – Statutory guidance for local authorities July 2014*¹.
- 1.3 In determining travel assistance for eligible children and young people, the Council is committed to reducing traffic congestion, improving road safety and reducing the environmental impact of vehicle journeys by promoting the use of alternative forms of travel - such as walking, cycling and use of integrated public transport. In this regard, the Council has adopted the principles contained in the 2016 Local Plan and policy LP98 adopted Supplementary Planning Document – ‘Delivering a more sustainable city’² and works closely with schools to develop School Travel Plans that help to achieve this aim. Wherever possible, in the provision of travel assistance the Council will consider travel options that minimise the number and length of vehicle journeys.

2 Who this policy applies to

- 2.1 This policy applies to all eligible children and young people of statutory school age (5 to 16) who are resident in Coventry and have special educational needs or a disability.
- 2.1 A child’s home is defined as the place where the child is habitually and normally resident in Coventry. Where a child lives at more than one address, the principal home address is the address at which the child spends at least 50% of their time, which would ordinarily be the address the child is registered at whilst attending school, and, where applicable, the address of the parent who is in receipt of Child Benefit or Child Tax Credits for the child.
- 2.2 The Council does not provide travel assistance for children of pre-school age (0-4 year olds) except in exceptional circumstances.
- 2.3 The eligibility criteria for young people age 16 to 25 in further education, is the subject of a separate policy.
- 2.4 This policy covers the provision of home to school travel assistance at the beginning and end of a school day only.

¹https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445407/Home_to_School_Travel_and_Transport_Guidance.pdf

² http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/111/planning_policy/2310/local_plan/2

3 Schools covered by this policy

- 3.1 This policy refers to “suitable” and “qualifying” schools. “Suitable” means that the school is suited to the pupil’s age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the pupil may have.
- 3.2 Qualifying schools are: community, foundation or voluntary schools; community or foundation special schools, non-maintained special schools, pupils referral units, maintained nursery schools; or city technology colleges (CTC), city colleges for the technology of the arts (CCTA) or academies, including free schools and University Technical Colleges (UTC).
- 3.3 For children with special educational needs, an independent school can also be a qualifying school where this is named on the child’s Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or statement, or it is the nearest of two or more schools named.

4 Eligibility criteria

- 4.1 The Council will take into account the following criteria and considerations (as set out in statutory guidance) to determine whether a child or young person is eligible to receive travel assistance from the Council:

- Statutory walking distance eligibility;
- Extended rights eligibility;
- Special educational needs, a disability or mobility problems eligibility;
- Unsafe route eligibility; and
- Exceptional circumstances.

4.2 Statutory walking distance

4.2.1 Statutory walking distance refers to the distance between the child’s home address and their nearest suitable school. The nearest suitable school is taken to mean the nearest qualifying school with places available that provides education appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the child and any special educational needs that the child may have. Statutory walking distance is measured by the shortest route along which a child, accompanied as necessary, may walk safely.

4.2.2 Children will be **eligible** for travel assistance based on distance if they meet the following criteria:

- a) The child lives at least 2 miles away from their nearest suitable school (as defined at 4.2.1 above) measured by the shortest safe walking distance and they are under 8 years of age); or
- b) The child **or young person** lives at least 3 miles away from their nearest suitable school (as defined at 4.2.1 above) measured by statutory walking distance and they are 8 years of age or over (and of compulsory school age).

4.3 Extended rights eligibility (low income levels)

4.3.1 Extended right eligibility refers to eligibility related to family income levels. The Council will provide travel assistance where pupils are entitled to free school meals or if their parents are in receipt of maximum Working Tax Credit in the following cases:

- a) The nearest suitable schools is beyond 2 miles (for children over the age of 8 and under 11);
- b) The nearest suitable school is between 2 and 6 miles (if aged 11-16 and there are not three or more suitable nearer schools);
- c) The nearest suitable school is between 2 and 15 miles and the nearest school preferred on grounds of religion or belief (aged 11-16).

4.4 Special educational needs, disability or mobility

4.4.1 If a child cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school accompanied by an adult, because of a disability affecting their mobility or associated health and safety issues relating to their special educational needs (SEN), they may be eligible for travel assistance. This is regardless of the distance between home and school. Eligibility will be assessed on an individual basis.

4.4.2 In determining whether a child can reasonably be expected to walk to school, accompanied by an adult, the Council will take into account the maturity of the child and whether it is reasonable to expect a parent to accompany a child of that age.

4.5 Unsafe route eligibility

4.5.1 A child will be eligible for travel assistance if it is agreed that all walking routes inside the distance criteria are judged to be unsafe.

4.6 Exceptional circumstances

4.6.1 Where a child or young person does not meet the eligibility criteria, parents may apply for travel assistance under the exceptional circumstances criteria. Applications will be determined on personal circumstances and consider whether on the evidence provided, a child would not be able to travel to and from school without support and that it would be unreasonable to expect a parent to meet the responsibility of securing attendance.

4.6.2 The following are examples of what would **not** be considered exceptional circumstances:

- Parents/carers work or care commitments
- Parents/carers experiencing difficulties in getting their child to a pick-up point

5 Types of travel assistance

5.1 In determining the form travel assistance will take the Council will consider the following factors:

- The special educational needs, disability or mobility needs of the child;
- The development of independent travel skills;
- The length of journey in distance and travel time;
- The efficient and effective use of public resources.

5.3 The travel assistance offer will include:

- i) **Independent Travel training:** the provision of independent travel training will enable young people to travel independently between home and school utilizing public transport when appropriate.
- ii) **Public Transport:** the provision of a bus pass for the child or if appropriate the child and accompanying adult.
- iii) **Innovative travel arrangements:** these may include a walking bus or cycling allowance.
- iv) **Personal Travel Budget:** A personal travel budget may be agreed with parents to enable them to make arrangements to secure their child's school attendance. This will be calculated at a rate of 45p per mile for journeys within the City and 25p per mile for out of City journeys
- v) **Minibuses and taxis:** Where assessed as essential due to the particular needs of the child or young person, the Council may provide a minibus, taxi or adapted vehicle. Generally, the number of children in each vehicle will be maximised. Route planning may require children to be collected from agreed pick-up points. In these instances pick-up points will be secured at safe and convenient locations, within a reasonable distance from the child's home.

5.4 The Council will ensure that the travel assistance offer is reasonable and meets the need of the child. If a parent chooses not to accept that offer, the Council will not be obliged to offer an alternative option.

6 Escorts

6.1 The Council may determine an escort is necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of children, the safe operation of vehicles and/or the care needs of individual children or young people. This will be determined during the eligibility assessment process.

7 Parental responsibility and preferences

7.1 Parents/carers are responsible in law, for ensuring that their children attend school regularly. If a parent/carer exercises their right to choose a school other than the nearest suitable school, the Council does not have a duty to provide travel assistance. In these circumstances parents/carers will be required to make their own travel arrangements.

7.3 If a family move home and elect to keep their child at a particular school, eligibility for travel assistance will be reviewed, If the school is not the nearest suitable school or the family have moved closer to the school and it is deemed within reasonable walking distance, the child may not meet the eligibility criteria for travel assistance.

8 The Application and Assessment Process

8.1 The application process is designed to be as simple as possible whilst ensuring that full consideration is given to the specific needs of the child or young person. Parents should allow up to three weeks from the date of application to the start of any assistance provided.

8.2 Stage 1: Application

8.2.1 The parent/carer must make a formal application for travel assistance. The application form is available on-line on the Coventry City Council website. Hard copies are available on request.

8.3 Stage 2: Assessment

8.3.1 The application will be assessed against the Council's eligibility criteria. If the criteria is met the Council will then determine the most appropriate type of travel assistance to offer taking into account the factors set out in paragraph 4 of this policy.

8.4 Stage 3: Decision

8.4.1 Following the assessment process, the parent/carer will be informed in writing of the outcome of the application and will be sent details of the travel assistance offer and any contact details they may require.

9 Appeals

9.1 An appeal must be submitted in writing within **28 calendar days** of the letter refusing travel assistance or proposing changes to existing arrangements. Appeals must be sent to the SEN Team, Coventry City Council, Floor 3, Civic Centre 2, Earl Street, Coventry CV1 5RS or by e-mail to SEN@coventry.gcsx.gov.uk within 28 calendar days of receiving the decision not to provide travel assistance. The letter of appeal must provide the reasons for challenging Coventry's refusal of assistance or changes to proposed arrangements and include any fresh documentary evidence.

9.2 Stage 1 – Initial Appeal

9.2.1 The appeal will be considered by a Senior Officer within the SEN Service. The appeal will be reviewed and all evidence submitted will be considered. The original decision may be upheld, overturned or alternative solutions may be identified. If the application is not approved the appellant will be notified of the decision in writing and will be informed of the next and final stage of the appeal process.

9.3 Stage 2 – Final Appeal

9.3.1 The appeal will be considered by an independent appeal panel. Final appeals must be submitted in writing within 28 days of the date of the stage 1 decision. This letter of appeal must provide the reasons for challenging the stage 1 decision and may include new documentary evidence. Appellants will be informed of the final decision in writing.

9.3.2 During the appeals process no new travel assistance will be provided or in the case of existing arrangements, no change will be implemented. A young person will be responsible for ensuring that they attend the educational establishment until the outcome of the appeal is determined. There is no right of appeal if a decision is made to vary the form of travel assistance. There is only a right of appeal if an application for travel assistance is refused or if existing travel assistance is ceased.

10 Removal of support

- 10.1 The Council may remove travel assistance with immediate effect where it is proven that assistance was obtained on the basis of fraudulent or misleading information, or where the young person's individual circumstances have changed, which results in young person no longer being eligible for support or has been assessed as not requiring such support.
- 10.2 The Council expects young people to behave appropriately on transport and must ensure health and safety of all passengers and staff is maintained. Any behavioral issues whilst on transport will be dealt with by the Council in conjunction with young person's educational establishment. Transport may be suspended whilst an investigation is undertaken. In such circumstances, it will remain the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that the young person attends the educational establishment in the interim period.

Proposed policy for public consultation

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APPENDIX 2

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Coventry City Council – Post 16 Travel Policy Statement

Version: November 2016 for public consultation

Proposed policy for public consultation

Contents

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Appendix A: Detailed eligibility criteria

Appendix B: Post 16 Providers

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1 Context

Coventry is a vibrant, compact and accessible city with excellent public transport links which enables the majority of young people studying in Post 16 education excellent access to their chosen provider through efficient and cost effective travel options.

The Council recognises that the future prosperity and well-being of the city depends in part on the achievement of young people in their education to maintain the future vitality and economic development of the city. To that end, this post 16 travel assistance policy is seen as crucial in ensuring that further education is accessible to all students irrespective of their economic or social background.

The Council has a clear aspiration to:

“improve accessibility for the whole community, with particular regards for the needs of disabled people, by promoting new or improved means of public transport, walking and cycling and by reducing reliance on the private car.”

The Council Post 16 Travel Assistance Policy actively promotes:

- Reductions in car usage
- Increased use of walking, cycling and public transport
- Reduced traffic speeds and improved safety particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

Public Transport is a key element in this strategy.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 Coventry City Council (CCC) is committed to ensuring that young people aged 16-18 are encouraged and supported to continue with their education and training where this is appropriate and suitable to their needs. This will enable young people to acquire the knowledge, skills and experience necessary for their personal development and progression into future employment or Higher Education.
- 2.2 This assistance is available to all young people aged 16-18 entering further education and to continuing learners aged 19 who started the course before becoming 19 years old. It also applies to learners aged 19 –25 with an Education Health and Care Plan who satisfy the eligibility criteria.
- 2.3 This document is the Council's Travel Assistance Statement. The Council is required by the Education Act 1996 to publish a transport policy statement each year, setting out what travel assistance is available from the Council and other bodies, to help young people aged 16-18 (and learners aged 19 to 25 with LDD who satisfy the eligibility criteria) to access post 16 education.
- 2.4 The policy statement supersedes all previous transport arrangements and entitlements. Funding for travel assistance is subject to annual budgets and financial affordability. The Transport Policy Statement will be reviewed annually. This version covers the academic year from 1 September 2017 to 31 August 2018.

3 Eligibility Criteria

- 3.1 You may be eligible for travel assistance to facilitate attendance for the purposes of education and training at: a school; a further education institution; an institution providing further or higher education maintained or assisted by the Council; an establishment funded directly by the Education Funding Agency (e.g. independent specialist providers for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; a learning provider funded by the Council to deliver accredited programmes of learning which lead to a positive outcome, if **all** of the following statements apply to you.
- a) You are a **resident of Coventry City**.
Learners not resident in Coventry, or who are looked after by another Council but live in Coventry, should refer to their home Transport Policy
 - b) You must be under 19 years (or have begun a particular course of education at the Post 16 educational provider and continued to attend that course (31st August).
*If you have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which identifies the need for specific travel assistance in exceptional circumstances you may receive travel assistance **up to the age of 25 years**.*
 - c) You **live more than three miles**, by the shortest route, away from your learning provider;
*If you have an Education, Health and Care Plan which identifies the need for specific travel assistance you may receive travel assistance if **you live less than three miles** away from your learning provider.*
 - d) You have a **low household income**.
Travel assistance will be provided only to students whose families or carers in receipt of one of the support payments listed in Appendix A.
 - e) Your chosen **study programme takes place at a publicly funded provider**.
A list of eligible providers is supplied in Appendix A.
 - f) Your **study programme is at foundation learning level, level 1, 2 or 3** (see appendix A for further information).
Your study programme should normally be at a higher level than your previous achievements.
 - g) Your **study programme is full-time** – equivalent to a minimum of 18 hours a week;
Your study programme does not have to last a full academic year.
 - h) Your learning provider is **the nearest provider** that can meet the majority of your needs.
Transport will not be provided on the basis of one subject being unavailable at your nearest learning provider.
- 3.2 Before the Council will consider any application for travel assistance you must demonstrate you have explored and exhausted all available sources of support as set out in section 4.
- 3.3 You will **not** be eligible for travel assistance if any of the following statements applies.
- a) Your study programme is at Level 4 or higher, including a foundation degree.
 - b) You are employed and starting or continuing an apprenticeship.
 - c) Your chosen study programme takes place at a privately -funded organisation.

4 Available Sources of Support

4.1 Fares and Concessions

There are no centrally available subsidies for student travel. However, a wide range of specific fare arrangements is available through transport providers, such as travel cards and special fare offers. See appendix C for useful contacts.

4.2 The 16 - 19 Bursary Fund

4.2.1 The 16-19 Bursary Fund, administered by individual education providers, is available to support any student who faces genuine financial barriers to participation, including transport costs. The 16-19 Bursary Fund has two elements.

4.2.2 Those most in need will be eligible for a **guaranteed bursary** of £1,200 a year. To qualify students must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Be in receipt of income support;
- Are a care leaver;
- Are in care of a local authority (a 'looked after child');
- If a registered disabled student, be in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance (due to be replaced by Personal Independence Payment).

4.2.3 To receive the maximum bursary the programme of study must last for 30 weeks or more. If the programme is shorter than 30 weeks, the student may receive less.

4.2.4 Education providers may, at their discretion, distribute any remaining funds to young people in ways that best fit the needs and circumstances of their students. The **discretionary bursary** is targeted at young people facing financial barriers to participation, including transport costs.

4.2.5 All education providers must make available a copy of their 16-19 Bursary Fund policy upon request. Applications should be made directly to the school, college or training provider

4.2.6 If a learner feels aggrieved about how their application for the 16-19 Bursary Fund has been handled, we recommend they should follow the school's /college's /provider's standard complaints procedure.

4.2.7 For further information on the 16-19 Bursary Fund visit <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>. Local providers and contact details are listed in Appendix B.

4.3 Residential Support Scheme

4.3.1 For students aged 16-18, if the Level 2 or Level 3 programme of study being followed is not available locally and is more than 15 miles from the home or more than a two hour return journey away, they can apply for help with the cost of term-time accommodation.

4.3.2 How much assistance is offered will depend on household income and where the education provider is based.

4.3.3 For further information on the Residential Support Scheme, including eligibility criteria, visit <https://www.gov.uk/residential-support-scheme/further-information>

4.4 Residential Bursary Fund

- 4.4.1 Students aged 16-18 may be able to get a bursary towards the cost of accommodation from some specialist residential colleges. This is different from the Residential Support Scheme.
- 4.4.2 Most of these colleges are 'Specialist Residential Centres' for subjects like agriculture, art and design or horticulture. Each has its own eligibility criteria, often including parental income. To apply for assistance you should contact the college directly.

4.5 Support for LDD learners 19+ - Discretionary Learner Support (DLS)

- 4.5.1 If you are aged 19 or over and having trouble meeting the costs of participating in further education at your college, you should ask your provider about the Discretionary Learner Support fund (DLS). This is similar to the 16-19 Bursary Fund.
- 4.5.2 Discretionary Learner Support is available in colleges and sixth form colleges to help with learning costs, including transport.
- 4.5.3 You should apply directly to your learning provider (e.g. your college). How much you get depends on your circumstances. Local providers and contact details are listed in Appendix B.

5 Assistance offered by Coventry City Council

5.1 Principles

- 5.1.1 For the majority of students, post-16 transport needs will be met by local travel schemes operated by local transport providers and/or the applications to the 16-19 Bursary Fund.
- 5.1.2 Where these schemes are insufficient to subsidise the transport costs incurred to attend post-16 education we may provide travel assistance. Learners in receipt of a 16-19 Bursary will be expected to use a proportion of the award towards transport costs. The value of any bursary/grant awarded to the learner must be identified on the application for travel assistance.
- 5.1.3 To qualify for travel assistance the student will be required to demonstrate how their chosen study programme meets their needs and offers academic progression towards their career goals. Support will be provided only to the nearest available school or college where a suitable study programme is available. Coventry City Council will not provide travel assistance to students who choose not to attend the nearest school or college offering a suitable programme. Transport will not be provided on the basis of a single subject being unavailable at the nearest learning provider.
- 5.1.4 Where young people meet the eligibility criteria identified in section 2. Coventry City Council will fund 50% of the cost for the most economical mode of transport.
- 5.1.5 Any transport assistance agreed by Coventry City Council will be paid on a termly basis. The continuation of assistance is subject to satisfactory attendance for the previous term (as confirmed by the education provider).

5.1.6 Students who apply for travel assistance before the start of the academic year in which they reach the age of 19 will remain eligible for the full academic year, subject to remaining on the course. The academic year is 1st September 2017 to 31st August 2018.

5.1.7 Travel assistance will cease on the 1st September immediately after a student reaches his/her 19th birthday except where the student began a particular course of education or training before becoming 19 and continues to attend that course, or where a case is made to disregard the age criteria on the basis of LDD.

5.2 Additional information for students aged 16 – 25 years with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

5.2.1 The Council encourages learners aged 16+ to travel independently on public transport to enable young people to develop the skills for a successful transition into adulthood.

5.2.2 The Council operates an Independent Travel Training Scheme for young people attending special schools and in many cases young people will already have developed these skills during their secondary education. We expect that the parents and carers of young people will continue to practice independent travel throughout the summer holiday prior to starting any study programme.

5.2.3 The Council recognises that independent travel, including the use of public transport, is not always a possibility for students with severe and complex learning difficulties and disability, and additional assistance with travel will be required.

5.2.4 The eligibility criteria (section 2) and principles (section 4) apply, with the following exceptions:

- a. young people with learning difficulties and disability in exceptional circumstances may receive transport assistance up to the age of 25 years; and
- b. may receive assistance for journeys of less than 3 miles.

5.2.5 Travel assistance will be provided only to the nearest available school or college offering a programme of study that will reasonably meet the identified needs of the learner. The study programme must provide an educational or training benefit to the student. Coventry City Council will make this judgement based on discussions held throughout the transition reviews. Coventry City Council will not provide assistance to students who choose not to attend the nearest school or college offering a study programme that reasonably meets these identified needs.

5.2.6 Learners who qualify for travel assistance and who are attending the same provider may be expected to travel together at the start and end of the day. This may mean students will need to be prepared to attend earlier or later than their course starts or finishes. It is the responsibility of the student and/or parents and carers of the student to discuss the programme timetable with the provider.

5.2.7 If the learner is attending residential provision, for example an Independent Specialist College, the travel assistance offered by the Council will be limited to a maximum of one return journey i.e. at the beginning and end of the academic year.

5.2.8 Existing sources of support must be identified at the point of application, including but not limited to any mobility allowance, direct payment and awards made under the 16-19 Bursary Fund, and will be taken into account when making a decision about the level

and type of travel assistance that may be provided. A decision may be taken that additional travel assistance will not be provided.

5.2.9 The Council will expect an average contribution of £600 per academic year from students or their parents towards the cost of transport. The amount of travel assistance offered may depend on household income.

6 Application

6.1 Making an application

6.1.1 Application forms for Post-16 Travel Assistance are available to download from www.coventry.gov.uk. The Scheme operates on an annually reviewed basis. All students are required to apply annually and to confirm their eligibility annually.

6.1.2 Applications for travel assistance should be made before the beginning of the academic year or before the start of the study programme. Travel assistance will only be considered from the date the application for travel assistance is received and cannot be backdated.

6.1.3 The application form will ask for the following information:

- how the eligibility criteria are met
- the name of the education or training provider and whether an offer of a place has been received and accepted
- reasons for the choice of named learning provider;
- what form of travel assistance is sought;
- details of any benefits or support which are or may be relevant to the application;
- details of any exceptional circumstances;
- evidence to support the application.

6.2 The decision

6.2.1 Where the eligibility criteria are met, the Council will decide whether to provide travel assistance and the level and type of assistance that will be offered. Applications which do not meet the above eligibility criteria will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

6.2.2 In making a decision the Council will have regard to the following:

- a. The needs of those for whom it would not be reasonably practicable to attend a particular establishment to receive education or training if no arrangements were made;
- b. The need to ensure that people in Coventry have reasonable opportunities to choose between different establishments at which education or training is provided;
- c. the Council's general duties to ensure that enough suitable education and training is provided to meet the reasonable needs of 16-18 year olds;
- d. Distance and journey time from the student's home to the learning provider, the cost of transport and alternative means of facilitating attendance at establishments;
- e. The nature of the route or alternative routes which the young person could reasonably be expected to take;
- f. Any preference to attend a particular educational establishment based on religion or belief;

- g. The nature of the young person's special educational needs, disability or learning difficulty;
- h. Anything recorded in an Education, Health and Care Plan or Transition Plan promoting independent travel skills.
- i. Whether there is a nearer learning provider which is suitable and can provide the same or similar qualification(s);
- j. The best use of the Council's resources.

6.2.3 If the eligibility criteria for Travel Assistance is met the Council will choose the travel assistance offer taking into account 5.2.2 above and will offer assistance in the following order of preference:

- Independent Travel Training (if deemed appropriate)*
- Bus Pass
- Assisted transport – you may be expected to travel to a pick up point to access assisted transport

6.2.4 If your application for assistance with transport is refused, you will receive a written notification outlining the reasons for this decision. The letter will tell you that you have a right of appeal and advise you how to exercise that right.

6.3 Changes in circumstance and reviews

6.3.1 Post 16 students (which includes those who started the course of study before their 19 birthday and who remain on that course) in receipt of travel assistance must inform Coventry City Council of any change of circumstance which will (or might) affect their entitlement to assistance.

6.3.2 The Council reserves the right to withdraw travel assistance from post 16 students where:

- a. The education or training provider state that attendance has not been satisfactory (measured over the previous term);
- b. It is proven that assistance was obtained on the basis of fraudulent or misleading information, or
- c. Where changes in the individual or household circumstances of the person of sixth form age result in either the person of sixth form age no longer being eligible for assistance or no longer requiring assistance.

7 Appeals

7.1 Making and appeal

7.1.1 This section outlines the appeal procedure to be used where you believe that the decision made by officers with respect to your eligibility for travel assistance is incorrect. This is not a statutory right of appeal.

7.1.2 An appeal must be submitted in writing within **28 calendar days** of the letter refusing travel assistance or proposing changes to existing arrangements to:-

* If a young person is deemed able to travel independently and travel training is refused the Local Authority is not under a duty to make an alternative offer

7.1.3 Appeals must be sent to the SEN Team, Coventry City Council, Floor 3, Civic Centre 2, Earl Street, Coventry Cv1 5RS or by e-mail to SEN@coventry.gcsx.gov.uk within 28 calendar days of receiving the decision not to provide travel assistance.

7.2 Stage 1

7.2.1 This will be considered by a Senior Officer within SEN Service.

7.2.2 The letter of appeal must provide the reasons for challenging Coventry's refusal of assistance or changes to proposed arrangements and include any fresh documentary evidence.

7.2.3 Your appeal will be reviewed and all evidence submitted will be considered. The original decision may be upheld, overturned or alternative solutions may be identified. If the application is not approved the young person will be notified of the decision in writing and will be informed of the next and final stage of the appeal process.

7.3 Stage 2 – Final Appeal

7.3.1 This will be considered by an independent appeal panel. Final appeals must be submitted in writing within 28 days of the date of the stage 1 decision. This letter of appeal must provide the reasons for challenging the stage 1 decision and may include new documentary evidence.

7.3.2 The young person will be informed of the final decision in writing.

7.3.3 If the young person is unhappy with the decision reached they have a further right of appeal to the Secretary of State if it is considered that the Council has failed to comply with procedural rules or there were any irregularities in the way the appeal was handled.

7.3.4 If the young person considers that the decision is flawed on public law grounds, they may apply for a judicial review.

7.3.5 During the appeals process no new travel assistance will be provided or in the case of existing arrangements, no change will be implemented. A young person will be responsible for ensuring that they attend the educational establishment until the outcome of the appeal is determined.

7.3.6 There is no right of appeal if a decision is made to vary the form of travel assistance. There is only a right of appeal if an application for travel assistance is refused or if existing travel assistance is ceased.

8 Ending of Travel Assistance and Complaints

8.1 Removal of support

8.1.1 The Council may remove travel assistance with immediate effect where it is proven that assistance was obtained on the basis of fraudulent or misleading information, or where the young person's individual circumstances have changed, which results in young person no longer being eligible for support or has been assessed as not requiring such support. It may also cease on the written request of the young person who, if necessary, has made alternative arrangements for them to travel to the education provision.

8.1.2 The Council expects young people to behave appropriately on transport and must ensure health and safety of all passengers and staff is maintained. Any behavioural issues whilst on transport will be dealt with by the Council in conjunction with young person's educational establishment. Transport will be suspended whilst an investigation is undertaken. In such circumstances, it will remain the responsibility of the young person to ensure that they attend the educational establishment in the interim period.

8.1.3 On-going or serious behavioural issues may result in transport arrangements being suspended or permanently removed.

8.2 Complaints

8.2.1 Once travel assistance has been agreed any concerns regarding the daily provision of the service should be made in the first instance to the transport provider, young people will be given these details.

8.2.2 Any formal complaints should be handled through Coventry City Council's Corporate complaints process by contacting:-

Complaints Manager
Coventry City Council
The Council House, Earl Street, Coventry CV1 5RR
<http://www.coventry.gov.uk/comments>

Proposed policy for public consultation

Appendix A: Detailed eligibility criteria Eligible learning and training providers.

Your study programme or training must take place through a publicly-funded provider:

- A publicly-funded school or academy (including a free school or University Technical College (UTC));
- A publicly-funded further education institution, including sixth form college and further education college;
- A local authority maintained or assisted institution providing further or higher education;
- An establishment funded directly by the Education Funding Agency (EFA), including independent specialist providers (ISP) for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities;
- A learning provider that is funded by a local authority to deliver accredited programmes of learning which lead to positive outcomes (this could include colleges, charities and private learning providers).

Eligible Qualifications:

- 1 Level 2 qualifications include: GCSEs, BTEC First Diploma, NVQ Level 2 and functional Skills qualifications at this level.
- Level 3 qualifications include: A Level, Access courses, BTEC National Diploma/Certificate, NVQ Level 3, Higher National Certificate (HNC), Higher National Diploma (HND).

Proof of household income

Travel assistance will be provided only to students whose families or carers provide evidence that they are in receipt of one of the following support payments:

- Income Support; or
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance; or
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance; or
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue & Customs) that does not exceed £16,190; or
- Working Tax credit 'run on' - the payment someone may receive for a further fourweeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit; or
- Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit; or
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

Young people who receive Income Support or Income-based Job Seekers Allowance in their own right are also eligible.

Note: A number of the above benefits are being replaced by Universal Credit. This will include: Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income-related Employment Support Allowance, Housing Benefit, Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit.

Appendix B: Useful contacts

Coventry local Providers with Post-16 Provision will supply information on 16-19 Bursary and Discretionary Learner Support (DLS) Applications.

CWT Training	www.cwt.org.uk	02476 231122
City College	www.covcollege.ac.uk	02476 791000
Heart of England	www.hoet.co.uk/full-time-courses	02476 630703
Henley College	http://www.henley-cov.ac.uk	02476 626300
Hereward College	www.hereward.ac.uk/our-offer/	02476 461231
Learndirect	www.learndirect.com/centresearch/centre/details/WM03LC82	02476 662096
MGTS (Midland Group Training Services)	www.mgts.co.uk/	02476 630333
Midland Training & Development	www.midlands.co.uk	02476 796422
Solihull College	www.solihull.ac.uk	0121 678 7000
Warwickshire College	www.warwickshire.ac.uk	01926 318000

For information about school sixth forms see:

https://www.coventry.gov.uk/directory/10/schools_and_their_contact_details

For further information about smaller training providers and third sector organisations offer post 16 provision see:

www.prospects.co.uk

Appendix C: Useful Contacts

Coventry City Council, Education and Inclusion Service

Eligibility for support to travel to FE colleges for young people aged 16-18 with learning difficulties and/or disabilities will be assessed by the Local Authority in line with the eligibility criteria set out in this policy and taking account of the needs that have been identified in the young person's Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Young people and their parents/carers should discuss this with their school in the first instance. Travel Assistance will be dealt with by the SEN Team, Civic Centre 2 Floor 3 New Council Offices, Coventry CV1 5RS Tel 02476831614 or e-mail sen@coventry.gcsx.gov.uk

Coventry City Council – Independent Travel Team

The team offer training in the practical skills required to travel independently. They also manage and assess risk by teaching safe practice and road safety and support people to build on their skills and develop their confidence.

Telephone number: 02476 294434. E-Mail: itt@coventry.gov.uk. Website www.coventry.gov.uk/itt

Coventry City Council Transportation (Place Directorate) - Provides information on travel plans and cycle routes.

Transport Policy Senior Officer: Martin Wilkinson - 024 7683 1184

Transport Policy Senior Officer: Nigel Mills – 024 7683 1563

Prospects Careers - This is a service for 13 to 19 year olds (up to 25 for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities) encouraging continuing training at work or through full-time education. They keep full details of educational establishments and courses offered.

Careers Advisers also work from the Coventry Job Shop, Bull Yard, Coventry where there is a drop in service between 9.00 -5.00 pm, Monday to Friday.

www.prospects.ac.uk

National Express - National Express is the main bus operator in Coventry; they provide information on bus travel in Coventry and the West Midlands including details of fares such as all-day and off-peak travel cards, plus route maps and timetables in the local area.

Information can be found at: www.nxbus.co.uk/coventry or the NX Coventry Travel Card and Information Centre, Pool Meadow Bus Station, Coventry.

Coventry City Council
Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

In line with the principles of decision making outlined in the City Council Constitution, the Council will ensure that its decision making is open and transparent, and that due regard is given to the Council's obligations and desire to promote equality of opportunity and equal treatment.

Part 1

This part must be completed and before formal consultation is undertaken and must be available during the consultation stage.

Author of this document: Adrian Coles

Name of Service Area/Proposal: Special Education Needs Travel Assistance

Head of Service: Jeannette Essex

Date of completion: 20th October 2016

Background to the planned changes

1. What is the background to the planned changes? Why is this change being considered? *If further information is available on the different scenarios that have been considered as part of this work, provide a link to the public document which contains this information.*

Coventry City Council has statutory responsibilities for travel assistance for eligible children and young people. However, it currently over-provides traditional forms of transport for children and young people compared to statutory duties and the provision made by other local authorities.

There are two key consequences of this. Firstly, some children and young people are missing out on the opportunity to develop independent travel skills. Independent travel skills gained in adolescence can be taken forward into adult life. Secondly, there is significant forecast overspend on the Council's Home to School Transport budget (2016/17 quarter 1 forecast £3.5m spend against a £3.1m budget). Current policies and practice are not aligned with national statutory duties.

The recommendation is for a public consultation on the following proposals:

a) A revised Travel Assistance Policy (Statutory School Age Children) which aligns the statutory walking distance eligibility criteria to national levels and has a stronger focus on the Council's travel assistance on public transport and innovative travel options aimed at reducing dependence on minibus and taxi options as appropriate.

b) A new Travel Assistance Policy for post 16 and post 19 students that fully reflects current statutory requirements. This policy includes a contributory charge towards the cost of travel assistance for all post-16 students whose families do not meet the criteria for low income household concessions.

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2. Who do you need to consider as part of this ECA? **stakeholder analysis*

The following are stakeholders:

- Children and young people who currently receive travel assistance from Coventry City Council
- Parents/.carers of children and young people who currently receive travel assistance from Coventry City Council.
- Schools and colleges attended by children and young people who currently receive travel assistance from Coventry City Council
- One Voice Parent/Carer Forum and other support groups

Pre-Consultation Engagement

This section refers to any activities that took place (such as briefings, meetings, workshops, scoping exercises etc.) with stakeholders before the formal consultation period.

3. What engagement activities took place prior to formal consultation and what feedback was received in relation to equality issues?

A workshop took place in February 2016 attended by a range of stakeholders (young people, education professionals, elected members and parents). In this workshop, the objectives of enabling children and young people to develop independent travel skills leading to increased independence coupled with the need for the financial context were discussed. The workshop identified ideas for how these objectives could be taken forward. The fundamental principle of enabling children and young people to develop the independent skills necessary to enjoy an 'ordinary life' are at the centre of Coventry's SEN strategy. This principle was fully endorsed by all stakeholders at a series of inclusion events held during 2015. The proposed Travel Assistance Policies are designed to enable children and young people to develop independent travel skills in preparation for adulthood, whilst taking into account any barriers or challenges in terms of maturity, cognition and mobility.

Analysis of Impact

In this section please ensure that you consider the three aims of the general duty as they affect **protected groups**. These groups are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage/Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy/Maternity
- Race
- Religion/Belief

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- Sexual Orientation

The **three aims of the general duty** require that a public authority, in the exercise of its functions, must have due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
2. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
3. Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

Note – when identifying potential impacts below, please only include impacts that may exist over and above general impacts that may affect the wider community/population. For example, a reduction in grant to Coventry Citizens Advice would affect all service users through a reduced level of first line advice being available to all – but it would affect the following groups more; age, disability, gender and race as they represent a larger proportion of the clients who use the advice service.

4. Outline below how this proposal/review could impact on protected groups positively or negatively, and what steps (if any) could be taken to reduce any negative impact that has been identified. *NB. only include realistic mitigating actions that could be delivered.*

Age

The table below identifies the impact on children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities according to age. This shows that of the 711 children and young people (aged 5-16 years old) who are currently receiving a service 593 (83.4%) would continue to qualify (a reduction of 118/16.6%) under the proposals for this age range.

	Age 5 – 16 years old eligible for travel assistance	Age 16+ years old eligible for travel assistance	Totals
Current Position	711	110	821
Proposed Position	593	100	693
Differences.	118	10	128

Disabilities

The proposed travel assistance policy, is positive for children and young people with severe and complex learning and physical disabilities as it enables equality of access to educational facilities at a level commensurate with their non-disabled peers.

The proposed travel assistance policy eliminates levels of enhanced service provision for children and young people who have the cognitive and physical ability to independently travel to school, accompanied by an adult when appropriate to equalise entitlement with their non-SEN peer group.

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Gender:

	Males age 5 – 16 using the service	Females aged 5 – 16 using the service	Males Age 16+ using the service	Females Age 16+ using the service	Totals
Current Position	543	168	74	36	821
Proposed Position	449	144	66	34	693
Difference	94 (17%)	24 (14%)	8 (10%)	2 (0.5%)	128 (16%)

Gender reassignment, Marriage/Civil Partnership, Pregnancy/Maternity, Religion/Beliefs

No statistical information is available for these characteristics for children and young people who receive travel assistance or their parents or carers

Race/Ethnicity

Information about race/ethnicity is not available for those who receive travel assistance. However, the overall race/ethnic profile for active case of Coventry children and young people with SEN and Education Health and Care Plans is as follows. There is an assumption that the profile of children and young people currently receiving travel assistance is proportioned in a similar way.

Ethnic Groups	Numbers	%
	1,695	100%
White: British	1,039	61%
White: Irish	7	0%
White Eastern European	1	0%
White: Traveller - Irish Heritage	1	0%
White: Other White	69	4%
Gypsy Roma	12	1%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	55	3%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African	12	1%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian	23	1%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed	28	2%
Asian/Asian British: Indian	79	5%
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	108	6%
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	22	1%
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	3	0%
Asian/Asian British: Other Asian	60	4%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African	105	6%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean	14	1%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black	15	1%

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Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	22	1%
Information not available	20	1%

Negative Impact:

The potential negative impact for statutory school age is that some children and young people who are currently in receipt of travel assistance will not be eligible. It is proposed that transitional arrangements are offered for those affected, which will include a phased implementation to enable families to make alternative arrangements. For young people aged 16+ year olds it is proposed that the Council levies a financial contribution charge of £600 per year towards the cost of travel assistance, unless parents are assessed as a low income household.

Positive impacts

The stronger focus on public transport and innovative travel options would mean that as travel options are reviewed (on at least an annual basis) the percentage of eligible children and young people independently accessing public transport options will increase, reducing reliance on minibus and taxis and therefore the Council's carbon footprint

Mitigating Factors

Independent travel training will be offered to students, requiring assistance to build the confidence and skills to access public transport. The policy places an expectation that this will be taken up, when appropriate.

Under the proposals the Local Authority may consider a personal transport budget, where this is financially beneficial to the Council. This option would provide greater choice and control to young people and/or their carer's.

Where Independent Travel Training is not appropriate and due to the child's age, it would not be appropriate for a parent to accompany them on public transport, alternative vehicles may be used e.g. a minibus or taxi.

5. Are there any other vulnerable groups that could be affected? i.e. deprivation, looked after children, carers.

The policy makes provision for exceptional circumstances that can take into account social need

Also include any information about the health/Marmot implications of this proposal. Contact Georgia Faherty (georgia.faherty@coventry.gov.uk or tel. 7683 1950) or Hannah Watts (hannah.watts@coventry.gov.uk or tel. 7683 3973) in Public Health for more information.

There are some positive and some negative implications of this proposal from a health inequalities/ Marmot perspective. By encouraging children and young people to travel independently (walking, or using public transport), this will enable them to develop skills and independence which will benefit them throughout their lives, both by increasing their knowledge and experience of different forms of

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transport which they can continue to use and by increasing their sense of independence and ability to take control over their lives. This will also increase levels of physical activity and result in fewer car journeys, which will lead to better health and wellbeing for children and young people.

At the same time, reducing travel assistance for children and young people to access could create a barrier for some children and restrict access to educational opportunities, and this could lead to poorer educational attainment, which in turn could have long term implications for a child's health, wellbeing and life chances. This has been mitigated in the proposal to some extent by continuing to provide travel assistance to low income families and those who have health or mobility problems. There is a small risk that families who do not meet these criteria will be negatively impacted by the proposal and this may have an impact on the ability of the child to access education and future educational attainment and opportunities, and/or on the resources of families, which may lead to them being less able to meet their health and wellbeing needs.

6. What are the gaps in evidence? Can this be addressed during the consultation stage? If so, how?

The gaps in evidence have been identified above. An understanding of the full impact of these proposals may be gained during the consultation process.

7. What are the likely impacts of this project/review on staff from protected groups?

The impact on staff is unknown at this stage. In the future as fewer minibuses are utilised there could be an impact on the number of drivers and escorts required.

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Part 2

This section should be completed AFTER the consultation stage has been concluded.

Author of this document:

Date of completion:

Post-Consultation

8. Referring to the information detailed in question 4 of Part 1 of the ECA Form, state if the consultation has confirmed the potential impacts identified that were identified. Also detail below any additional information about potential impacts that has been highlighted during the consultation.

Outcome of equality impact

9. Indicate which of the following best describes the equality impact of this project/review:

- There will be **no** equality impact if the proposed option is implemented
- There will be **positive** equality impact if the proposed option is implemented
- There will be **negative** equality impact if the proposed option is implemented but this can be objectively justified
- There will be both **positive and negative** impacts if the proposed option is implemented

Summary of ECA

Write a paragraph below which summarises the key aspects of this ECA.

NB. - This paragraph will be included in the Decision-making Report as well as the end of year ECA report

Where specific objectives have been set for any protected groups around equality impact, also include this information below.

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Coventry City Council Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form

Next steps

Please send this completed ECA to the Insight Team as follows:

Wendy Ohandjanian (wendy.ohandjanian@coventry.gov.uk tel. 7683 2939)

Jaspal Mann (jaspal.mann@coventry.gov.uk tel. 7683 3112)

Version Control

Version	Date	Summary of changes (Author)
1.0	10 th October 2016	Lisa Harasym
1.1	11 th October 2016	Gemma Tate
1.2	13 th October 2016	Jeannette Essex
1.3	20 th October 2016	Hannah Watts
1.4	20 th October 2016	Wendy Ohandjanian
1.5	20 th October 2016	Adrian Coles

Scrutiny Board 2 – Appendix B

Consultation on proposals to change the Education Travel Assistance Policy: for children of statutory school age and post 16 learners with SEN and/or disabilities

The consultation starts on Monday 21st November 2016 and finishes on Friday 13th January 2017.

Why are changes proposed?

Local Authorities have some statutory responsibilities to assist children and young people with SEN (Special Educational Needs) and/or disability to attend school or college. The law makes it clear that if a pupil attends a school that is the nearest suitable school to their home and the school is more than 2 miles away (children under 8) or more than 3 miles away for children over 8 travel assistance must be provided. However, Coventry currently provides travel assistance for some pupils who live much closer to school than this.

As a consequence:

- Some children and young people are not given the opportunity to develop the independent travel skills that they need in adulthood; and
- The Council is spending significantly more money on travel assistance than necessary, therefore diverting funds from other important services.

SEN and Disability: The law places additional requirements to offer travel assistance to pupils with significant SEN and disability irrespective of the distance from home to school.

What will not change?

Your child will continue to be entitled to travel assistance if their school is the nearest suitable school and it is more than 2 miles away (children under 8) or more than 3 miles away for children over 8 years of age.

Your child is highly likely to **continue to be entitled to travel assistance** if they have:

- Profound and multiple learning difficulties;
- Complex communication disorder that has a severe impact on cognition;
- Severe social, emotional and mental health difficulties requiring supervision to secure personal safety,
- Severe learning disability;
- Sensory impaired (registered blind or profoundly deaf)
- Physical disability that significantly impedes mobility e.g. wheelchair users.

What is proposed to change?

Statutory school age

It is proposed that applications for statutory school age travel assistance will be assessed on the following criteria in this order:

1. Distance from their nearest suitable school taking into account any 'unsafe' route;
2. SEN and disability*;
3. Exceptional circumstances;

*Please note your child may not satisfy the SEN criteria if they do not have a mobility difficulty and their assessed need is:

- Moderate learning difficulties
- Speech and language difficulties
- Moderate hearing loss
- Moderate visual impairment

- Moderate social communication difficulties
- Moderate social emotional mental health difficulties

Your child will continue to be entitled to travel assistance if their school is the nearest suitable school and it is more than 2 miles away (children under 8) or more than 3 miles away for children over 8 years of age. This will be the case even if they do not satisfy the SEN criteria.

The proposed policy sets out in order the different types of travel assistance that will be offered. There is a proposed change to personal travel assistance budgets that equalises payments to all parents/carers at a rate of 45p per mile within City and 25p per mile outside of City.

Post-16

It is proposed that any student granted travel assistance to enable them to access an appropriate Further Education course will make a financial contribution to the cost of £600 per year, which can be paid in half-termly instalments of £100. The proposed contribution is based on West Midlands Local Authorities average charge. It is proposed that for families on low income (defined as receiving highest level working tax credit – Appendix A in the draft policy) the charge will be halved to £300 per academic year.

If you are currently receiving travel assistance it is proposed that these changes will take effect from 1st September 2017. Any new applicants would be assessed under the new policy from 1 April 2017.

What would the overall impact on current users with SEN and/or Disability be?

School age

The Council currently provides travel assistance for 711 pupils. It is estimated that 118 pupils may be affected by these changes, although some will be leaving the school system in July 2017.

Post 16

The Council currently provides travel assistance for 120 students. It is estimated that 10 post-16 students may no longer be eligible under the proposed changes, although some of these would have completed their course by July 2017.

How can I get involved?

You can give your feedback on this consultation in the following ways:

- Completing the [on-line](#) survey or completing the paper survey;
- Attending one of the following drop-in sessions.

Date	Time	Location
Monday 28 th November	1pm-2.30pm	Moat House Leisure and Neighbourhood Centre – Ground Floor Studio, Winston Avenue, Coventry CV2 1EA
Thursday 8 th December	10am - 11.30am	Jardine Young People’s Centre, Jardine Crescent, Tile Hill, Coventry CV4 9PL
Thursday 8 th December	6.30pm-8pm	Cheylesmore Community Centre, Computer Room Poitiers Road, Coventry CV3 5JX
Friday 6 th January	10am – 11.30am	Broad Street Meeting Hall. 122 Broad Street, Coventry CV6 5BJ
Tuesday 10 th January	6:30pm-8pm	Council House, Diamond Room 1 and 2, Earl Street, Coventry CV1 5RR

- If you have any questions please email to the following: travelconsult@coventry.gov.uk
- If you would like any of the documents in different formats, please call: 024 7683 1614.
- A copy of the findings from the consultation will be available on the Coventry City Council website at: www.coventry.gov.uk/travelconsult.

- A final decision is planned to be made at the Coventry City Council Cabinet meeting on 7th March 2017.

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Coventry City Council

Briefing note

To: Education and Children's Scrutiny Board

Date: 8th December 2016

Subject: Outstanding Issues Report

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To inform Members of the approach to be taken on progress, outcomes and responses to recommendations and substantial actions made by the Scrutiny Board.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are recommended to:
- 1) Note the attached outstanding issues at Appendix 1

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 When recommendations and actions are made following a scrutiny meeting, they are circulated to the relevant Cabinet Member and officer, and recorded on a recommendations tracker.
- 3.2 The purpose of this report is to bring to the Boards attention the responses received from Cabinet Members and officers in regard to recommendations and actions from previous meetings.
- 3.3 Once a response has been received or an action dealt with, it will be removed from this report and kept in the full recommendations tracker. The complete tracker can be viewed by contacting the Scrutiny Team on the details below.

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Appendix 1 - Outstanding Issues

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Cabinet Member/ Responsible Officer	Rec', Action or Information	Recommendations/ Actions	Officer contact	Response/ Status
21st July 2016	Early Help Strategy Progress Report	John Gregg	I	The SB were keen to communicate to all providers including schools and nurseries a standardised definition of 'school ready' including a list of expectations i.e. be able to tie a shoe lace	John Gregg	
13th October 2016	Relationship and Sex Education in Coventry	Cllr Maton/Cllr Caan	R	The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills is recommended to: 1) Consider including questions on Relationships and Sex Education as part of schools safeguarding audit s175/s157 audit providing challenge to schools when appropriate. The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills and the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport are recommended to: 2) Consider the use of un-validated data on conceptions to enable more up to date analysis and better targeting of services. 3) To involve young people in discussions about what they would like as part of Relationships and Sex Education	Gennie Holmes, Jane Moore, Nadia Ingliss, Judith Simmons	Briefing note send to Cabinet Members 2/11/16
13th October 2016	Health Visiting Services	Cllr Caan/Cllr Ruane	R	The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport and the Cabinet Member for Children's Services are recommended to: 1) Request that the Director of Public Health and the Director of Children's Services discuss how to calculate an average number of CAF's it is appropriate for Health Visitors to hold.	Gennie Holmes	Briefing note send to Cabinet Members 2/11/16 2/11/16 Response from Cllr Ruane requesting officers to prepare a response

13th October 2016	AOB		A	SB2 to congratulate the CSE Team that had received an award. Letter of congratulations be sent.	Gennie Holmes	Postponed until the awards are announced and also to include the individual NQSW who has also been nominated for an award.
10th November 2016	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking and Refugee Children	Cabinet	R	(a) Notify that meeting the needs of this vulnerable group places our potential financial burden on the LA and partners (NHS and Schools) (b) Promote locally and nationally for all councils to take an equal share of responsibility for these children (c) Petition central government for a full family formula	Gennie Holmes	Recommendations going to Cabinet on 29th November with small amendments 1.1 That Cabinet: a) Notify that meeting the needs of this vulnerable group places a potential financial burden on the LA and partners (NHS and Schools) b) Promote locally and nationally for all councils to take an equal financial responsibility for these children Petition central government for a fair funding formula.
10th November 2016	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking and Refugee Children		A	SB requested data on progress of these children in school in the education performance report to be considered in February	Gennie Holmes	To be added to the work programme. COMPLETE will be included in the item at the February meeting
10th November 2016	Coventry Youth Offending Service Youth Justice Plan		A	The Scrutiny Board agreed the recommendation in the report and also agreed to endeavour to look at next year's action plan as timely as possible and requested an update on this year's action plan in 3 months' time	Gennie Holmes	To be added to the work programme. COMPLETE
10th November 2016	Prevent in Schools	Cabinet Members	R	The Scrutiny Board considered the report and requested that the Cabinet Member congratulate officers and continue to work with partner organisations and agencies in the city	Gennie Holmes	Cabinet Members and Directors emailed 25/11/16 COMPLETE
10th November 2016	Prevent in Schools		I	Members requested data regarding the number of schools delivering prevent training be made available	Matt Stokes/ Geoff Thomas	

10th November 2016	Prevent in Schools		A	Officers monitor the quality of the training where we can gain access to the material	Matt Stokes/ Geoff Thomas	
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Education and Children's Services (2)

Scrutiny Work Programme 2016/17

16th June 16
Recruitment and Retention of Social Work Staff (task and finish group) Improvement Board - 11 May 2016
21st July 16
SCR Early Help Strategy Improvement Board - 22 June 16
15th September 16
'Stepping Up' and 'Stepping Down' Process for Social Care cases. Quality Assurance Auditing Staying Put Arrangements and Policy
13th October 16
Supervision of Social Care Staff recommendations Teen pregnancy and PSHE in schools Health Visiting Contract Improvement Board Report – 14 September 16
10th Nov 16
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children Youth Offending Service Prevent in schools
8th December 16
Improvement Board Report – 2 November 16 Travel Assistance Policy Change – Public Consultation Improving and Redesigning City Council Children's Residential Care Provision
12th January 17
LSCB Annual report Monitoring of SCR recommendations from 15/16 Improvement Board Report – 14 December 16
9th February 17
Improvement Board Report – 25 January 17 Education Performance Report Academisation Programme, Free Schools and Grammar Schools
9th March 17
Supervision of Social Care Staff – progress report Health Visiting and the Family Hub Model
6th April 17
Progress Reports -These items will only be reported to the Board by exception. Where progress is on track reports will be circulated to the Board for information only
Changes to adoption agency – progress report Family Drugs and Alcohol Court – progress report MASH update - progress report 12 Jan 17 Children's Social Care Workforce Strategy – progress report 9 Feb17

Early Help Strategy – reported to meeting 21 July
Progress on Audit Findings
Fostering and Adoption Annual Reports

Proposed Agenda Items

Voices of Care
Young Carers
Serious Case reviews
Commissioned Services
CAMHS
Short Breaks Review
School based police panels
SCR – Child F
Ofsted
Corporate Parenting

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
16th June 16	Recruitment and Retention of Social Work Staff (task and finish group)	Members wanted to look in depth at the recruitment of social workers including consideration of reasons for lack of interest in previous recruitment campaigns and remuneration and responsibility levels of social workers. To include reputational factors as well.	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
	Improvement Board - 11 May 2016	A standing item as agreed by Council reporting progress against the areas identified in the improvement notice.	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
21st July 16	SCR	The Board will consider recommendations from a serious case review.	Janet Mokades Cllr Ruane
	Early Help Strategy	To receive a progress report on the Early Help Strategy including the Strengthening Families. Also to include hard to engage families (see SCR recommendations)	John Gregg Fran Doyle Cllr Ruane
	Improvement Board - 22 June 16	A standing item as agreed by Council reporting progress against the areas identified in the improvement notice.	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
15th September 16	'Stepping Up' and 'Stepping Down' Process for Social Care cases.	Following the Boards consideration of the SCR on Baby C Members requested more information on the new processes implemented as a result of the recommendations	John Gregg Fran Doyle Nancy Meehan Cllr Ruane
	Quality Assurance Auditing	Following the Boards consideration of the SCR on Baby C Members requested more information on the auditing of case work to ensure consistency and quality of practice	John Gregg Terri Cartwright Cllr Ruane
	Staying Put Arrangements and Policy	To look in more detail at the Staying Put Policy, involving representation from the Foster Carers Association. The report should cover promotion of the policy with young people, children social work support at 18, financial support to Foster Carers. The Voice of the Child Task and Finish Group raised the issue of independence training and the Chair suggested that it be looked at separately.	John Gregg Jivan Sembi Cllr Ruane
13th October 16	Supervision of Social Care Staff recommendations	A progress report on the recommendations accepted by the Cabinet Member on 14/4/16	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
	Teen pregnancy and	To consider what schools are doing to support the Teenage	Kirston Nelson,

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
	PSHE in schools	Pregnancy Strategy and how the Council is supporting them	Nadia Ingliss Judith Simmonds Cllr Maton
	Health Visiting Contract	Members wanted to know more about the current health visiting contract particularly Health Visitors involvement in CAF's.	Cllr Ruane Jane Moore
	Improvement Board Report – 14 September 16	A standing item as agreed by Council reporting progress against the areas identified in the improvement notice.	
10th Nov 16	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children	Members requested to be kept up to date on numbers of UASC in the city and services to support them. Cabinet Member report for the meeting on the 3 rd November.	Sonia Watson
	Youth Offending Service	An update on progress of the Youth Offending Service including the recent inspection report and subsequent action plan	Georgina Kell Cllr Ruane
	Prevent in schools	To look in more detail how the Prevent agenda is being delivered in schools	Kirston Nelson Cllr Maton
8th December 16	Improvement Board Report – 2 November 16	A standing item as agreed by Council reporting progress against the areas identified in the improvement notice.	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
	Travel Assistance Policy Change – Public Consultation	To consider the consultation document for changes to the policy on travel assistance	Kirston Nelson Cllr Maton Jeanette Essex/Adrian Coles
	Improving and Redesigning City Council Children's Residential Care Provision	Members of the Board will be able to comment on the proposed options as part of the consultation process.	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
12th January 17	LSCB Annual report	The annual report of the local safeguarding children's board	Elizabeth Edwards Cllr Ruane
	Monitoring of SCR recommendations from	The Board wanted to know how the outcomes of recommendations from SCR's are monitored and whether implemented recommendations have been effective in	Elizabeth Edwards Cllr Ruane

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
	15/16	protecting children	
	Improvement Board Report – 14 December 16	A standing item as agreed by Council reporting progress against the areas identified in the improvement notice.	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
9th February 17	Improvement Board Report – 25 January 17	A standing item as agreed by Council reporting progress against the areas identified in the improvement notice.	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
	Education Performance Report	An annual report with the headline performance data from schools, including vulnerable groups including children educated out of school and excluded pupils and asylum seeking and refugee children.	Kirston Nelson Cllr Maton
	Academisation Programme, Free Schools and Grammar Schools	The Board wanted to consider the implications of the Government white paper and the proposals for all schools to become academies by 2020. Also to include information on how the Council works with Free Schools as referred from Scruco from a suggestion by a member of the public	Kirston Nelson Cllr Maton
9th March 17	Supervision of Social Care Staff – progress report	Following an item on progress on recommendations at their meeting on 13 th November, Members requested a further update on progress	Lee Pardy-McLaughlin Cllr Ruane
	Health Visiting and the Family Hub Model	Following an item on the Health Visiting contract, Members agreed to a further report on how Health Visiting can complement the Family Hub model	Jane Moore, John Gregg
6th April 17			
	Progress Reports - These items will only be reported to the Board by exception. Where progress is on track reports will be circulated to the Board for information only		

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
	Changes to adoption agency – progress report	A regional adoption agency has been established. Members wanted a progress report and information on performance	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
	Family Drugs and Alcohol Court – progress report	Progress on the work of the FDAC	John Gregg
	MASH update - progress report 12 Jan 17	Following the meeting in January 2016, Members requested a further progress update, particularly in relation to the recommendations made.	
	Children’s Social Care Workforce Strategy – progress report 9 Feb17	Following the introduction of the Workforce Strategy at their meeting on 25 February, Members requested a further progress report	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
	Early Help Strategy – reported to meeting 21 July	Members requested further progress reports following their meeting on 21 st July 2016	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
	Progress on Audit Findings	At their meeting on 15 th September, Members requested regular updates on progress against those areas where audits suggested improvement is required. 7. Care planning continues to cause concern, with drift and lack of contingency planning. 8. Neglect and “start again” syndrome is highly visible on a high proportion of cases including those held in early help. 9. Focus is on assessment, rather than on intervention, impact and outcomes. 10. Looked after Children, have too many moves. 11. Life Story work continues to be inconsistent. 12. Placement sufficiency has a negative impact on the ability of the service to identify appropriate placements for those young people ready for independence. 13. Whilst children are being seen, it is sometimes unclear about the purpose of the visit or nature of the intervention.	John Gregg Cllr Ruane

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
		14. Recording is still inconsistent 15. Use of chronologies is not routine or properly understood. 16. Supervision is task focused and not reflective.	
	Fostering and Adoption Annual Reports	A regular report on progress on adoption and fostering services.	
Proposed Agenda Items	Voices of Care	Members requested regular updates on the work and benefits of the Voices of Care Council, including the results of surveys with LAC	Sheila Bates
	Young Carers	Referred from the Corporate Parenting Board, to look at support offered to children and young people who are carers, especially those that are children in need, child protection or who come into care because of the health of their parents.	Suzanne Lawlor – Carers Strategy
	Serious Case reviews	The Board will consider recommendations from serious case reviews when they are published. To also include Wisteria Lodge investigation.	Cat Parker/Hardeep Walker Cllr Ruane/Janet Mokades
	Commissioned Services	Members requested further information about commissioned services and how contracts are awarded and monitored, including Barnardo's.	John Gregg/Sally Giles Cllr Ruane
	CAMHS	A follow up and progress report on work done with SB5 last year, especially in terms of prescription drug use. Also a task and finish group to investigate why there significantly high number of referrals through CAMHS on the ASD pathway.	Jacqueline Barnes
	Short Breaks Review	To look in more detail at the provision of short breaks for disabled children	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
	School based police panels	A report on how the police are supporting improving behaviour in schools and tackling anti-social behaviour in partnership	Kirston Nelson Cllr Maton
	SCR – Child F	The Board will consider recommendations from a serious case review.	
	OfSted		
	Corporate Parenting	Looking at the Council's Corporate parenting requirements and	John Gregg

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
		how the Council is meeting them. To cover in the first meeting of the municipal year.	